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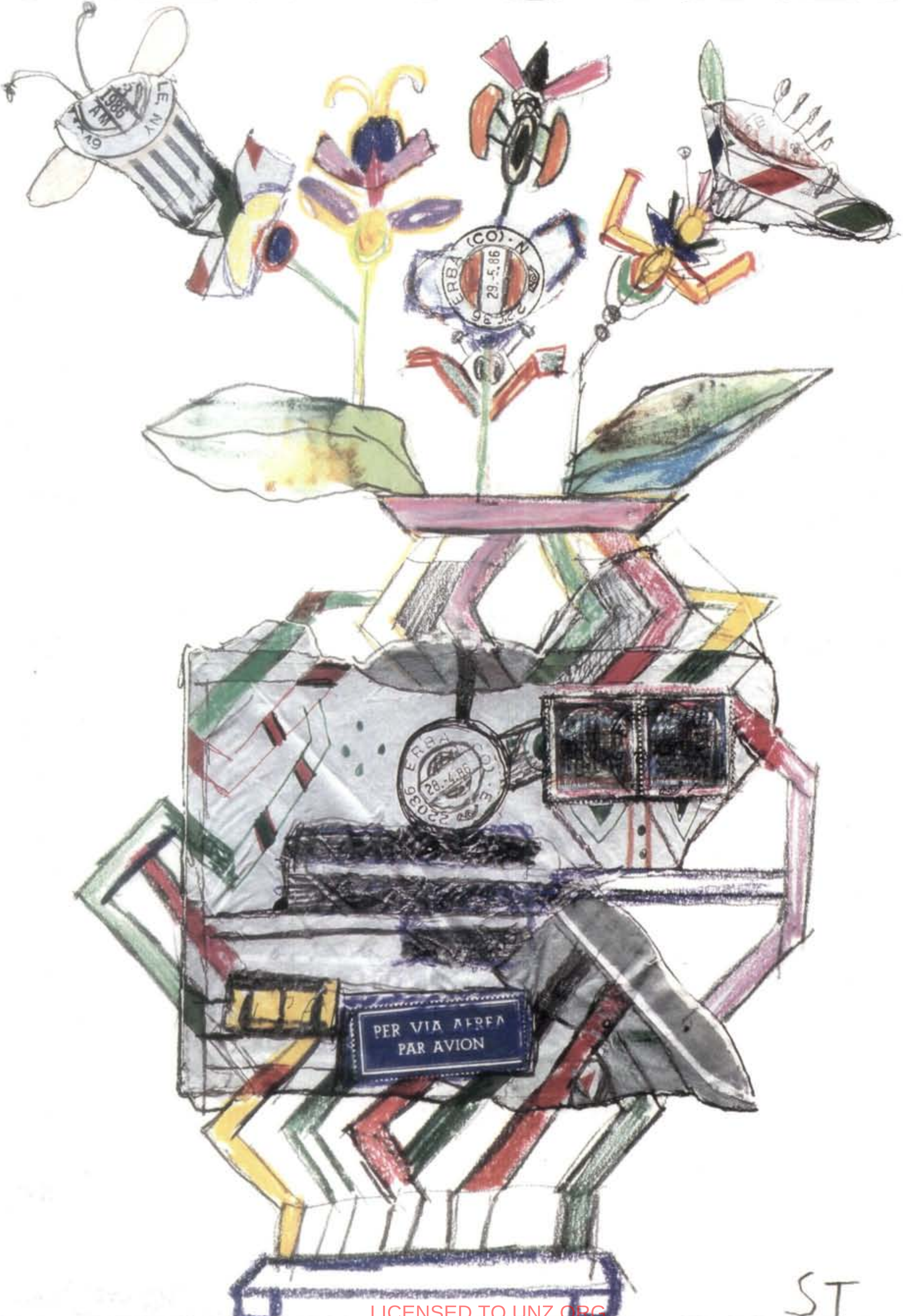
THE NEW YORKER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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Black Sea Follies—A witty musical satire, conceived and directed by the audacious Stanley Silverman, about Joseph Stalin and his great victim Dmitri Shostakovich. Most of the music is by Shostakovich, with a few entries by Vincent Youmans and Francis Scott Key, among others. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/29/86.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 11.)

Bloody Poetry—A play by Howard Brenton. (*Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center,* 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Jan. 25.)

Broadway Bound—A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. The cast includes Linda Lavin, Jonathan Silverman, John Randolph, Philip Sterling, and Jason Alexander. The director is Gene Saks. (12/15/86) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Circle Repertory Company—A comedy whodunit by John Bishop, **THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940,** is the third in this season's series. Opens Wednesday, Jan. 7, and will run through Sunday, Jan. 25. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Colored Museum—A sharp, satiric revue on the subject of blackness and related matters which is almost done in by damnable sound amplification. George C. Wolfe was the clever writer, and L. Kenneth Richardson the able director. The performers, all of them splendid, are Loretta Devine, Tommy Hollis, Reggie Montgomery, Vickilyn Reynolds, and Danitra Vance. (11/10/86) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Common Pursuit—An English import. Six Cambridge undergraduates, in the sixties, plan to launch a literary magazine in accordance with the rigorous standards of the critic F. R. Leavis, and in the ensuing twenty years manage to breach these standards. Simon Gray's play, while not especially original, is consistently entertaining, and it is very well performed, under the direction of the dramatist and Michael McGuire. With Kristoffer Tabori and Dylan Baker, among others. (11/3/86) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Equity Library Theatre—The fourth in this season's series of eight productions will be a revival of **TAKE ME ALONG,** a musical based on Eugene O'Neill's play "Ah, Wilderness!," with music and lyrics by Bob Merrill and a book by Joseph Stein and Robert Russell. Opens on Thursday, Jan. 8, and will run through Sunday, Feb. 1. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

The Front Page—John Lithgow and Richard Thomas head the enormous cast of the Hecht-MacArthur classic about hard-drinking, slovenly, and unscrupulous newspaper reporters in jazz-age Chicago. (12/8/86) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Jan. 11.)

A Girl's Guide to Chaos—A comedy by Cynthia Heimel. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Groucho: A Life in Revue—A surprisingly lively and touching show about the great comedian/humorist. Frank Ferrante's dedicated impersonation becomes a true performance; Les Marsden, doubling, comes close to Chico and seems inspired as Harpo; and Faith Prince deftly acts the women in their lives, among them, of course, Margaret Dumont. Arthur Marx (son of Groucho) and Robert Fisher were the playwrights; Mr. Marx directed. (10/20/86) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Jackie Mason's "The World According to Me!"—Jackie Mason is a classic standup Jewish comedian, the George Washington of the Borscht Belt. His material consists almost entirely of outrageous insults addressed to Jews, Italians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, and Wasps. (Only the Irish escape unscathed, and who knows why? Perhaps they are being offered the greatest insult of all.) For more than thirty years, Mason's audiences—that is, his victims—have found him hilarious, and the sorry truth of the matter is that he *is* hilarious, for reasons that might well cause Freud himself to break down and sob as he sought to explain them. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill—A play of sorts about one of Billie Holiday's last engagements, at a night club in Philadelphia, well sung and performed by the personable Lonette McKee, who bears no resemblance—vocal, physical, or temperamental—to the late Miss Holiday. (9/29/86) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 6. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Lily Dale—This play is one of Horton Foote's chronicles of Texas before the First World War. Don Bloomfield is a young man who pays a visit to his mother and sister in Houston. Mary Stuart Masterson is the sister and Greg Zittel is their abrasive stepfather. (12/1/86) (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Man for All Seasons—A deliberate, not to say plodding, production of Robert Bolt's play, with Philip Bosco as Sir Thomas More,

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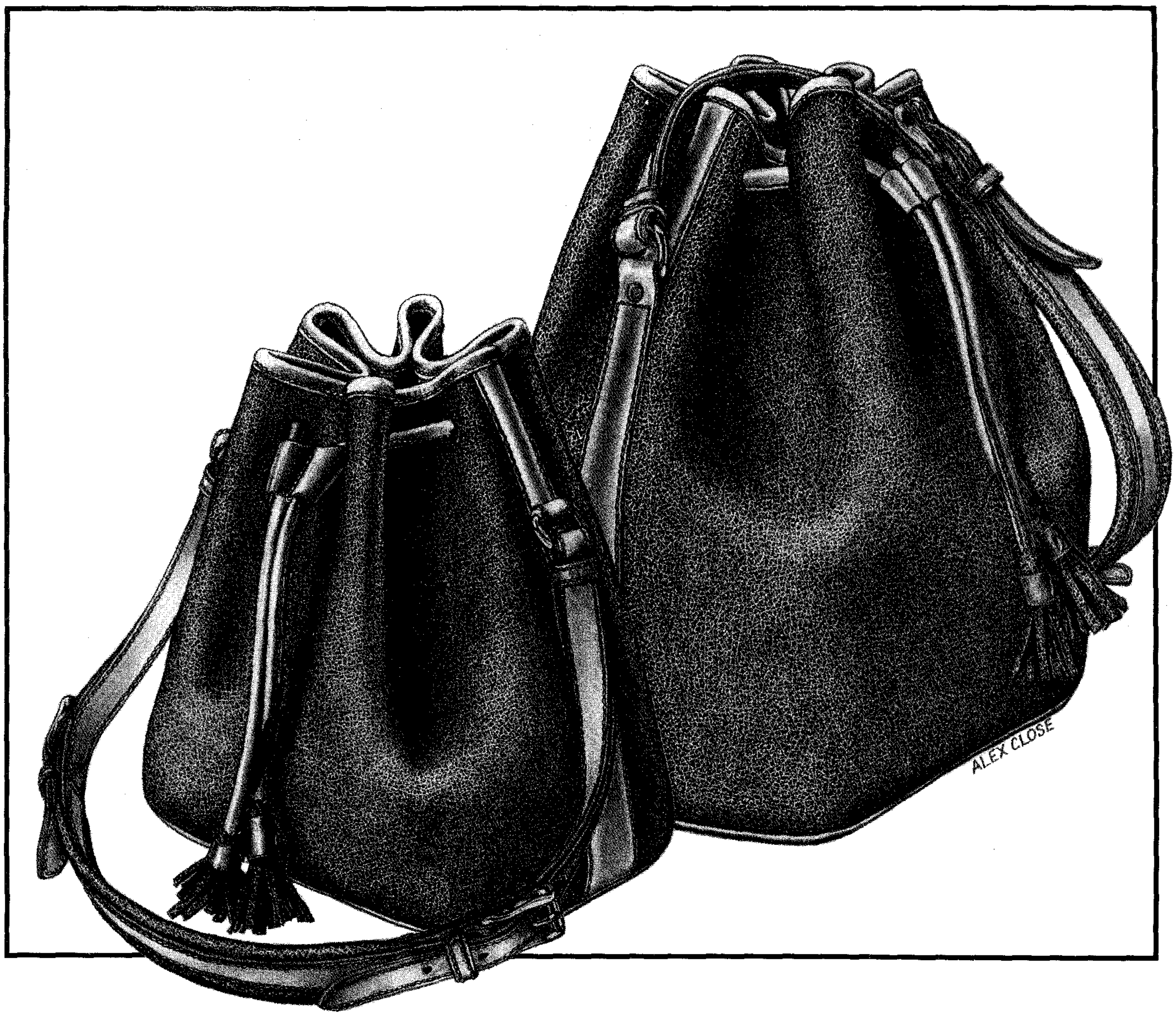

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Charles Keating as the Common Man, and with Maria Tucci giving a first-rate performance as More's wife. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, Jan. 25.)

Me and My Girl—A fifty-year-old British musical, once starred in by Lupino Lane. His worthy successor is Robert Lindsay, who in his day has played Hamlet and can evidently play anything. (8/25/86) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Merchant of Venice—Shakespeare's play, with Sigourney Weaver as Portia. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Jan. 11.)

Olympus on My Mind—A larky little musical based on the Amphitryon legend. Music by Grant Sturiale and words (book and lyrics) by Barry Harman, who also directed. (8/18/86) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Sex Tips for Modern Girls—A musical with a book by Peter Eliot Weiss and score and lyrics by John Sereda. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Mondays through Wednesdays and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Stepping Out—A play, with tap dancing, by Richard Harris. Currently running in London; Tommy Tune is the director for this production. Previews through Saturday, Jan. 10. Opens officially on Sunday, Jan. 11. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Sweet Sue—A comedy by A. R. Gurney, Jr., with Mary Tyler Moore and Lynn Redgrave. John Tillinger is the director. Previews Wednesday, Jan. 7. Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 8. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3.)

The Widow Claire—Horton Foote continues to explore the lives of the citizens of Harrison, Texas. The principal characters here are a racy, nervous widow and young Horace Robedaux (two years post-"Lily Dale"—see above), and they are played to perfection by Hallie Foote and Matthew Broderick. (12/29/86) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Wild Honey—An old-fashionedly large cast—Ian McKellen, Kathryn Walker, Kate Burton, Kim Cattrall, Franklin Cover, and Sullivan Brown—cavort through a play by Michael Frayn that is said to be drawn from an early Chekhov comedy. The show is stolen by a full-scale steam locomotive. (12/29/86) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

You Never Can Tell—The Shaw play of 1896 has been given an agreeable production, with an exceedingly clever performance by Victor Garber as a lovesick intellectual (for whom read Bernard Shaw). Also in the cast are Uta Hagen, John Cullum, Lise Hilboldt, Stefan Gierasch, and John David Cullum. The direction is by Stephen Porter. (10/20/86) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** A musical version of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Twain's great novel has been respectfully dealt with in a book by William Hauptman, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller. Heidi Landesman has somehow managed to put the Mississippi River onstage. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DROOD:** Old-fashioned mock-Victorian nonsense, with book and songs by Rupert Holmes and direction by Wilford Leach. The cast is headed by George Rose. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,112 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES:** A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy, with Swoosie Kurtz and John Mahoney, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the director. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Ossie Davis and Hal Linden. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SOCIAL SECURITY:** A lively, conventional comedy by Andrew Bergman. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SWEET CHARITY:** A hit twenty years ago and deservedly a hit today. Bob Fosse has been its chief maker, assisted by Neil Simon (book), Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields (songs), and Robert Randolph (scenery). Ann Reinking stars. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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MISCELLANY

The Mikado—A production of Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta which was first staged at the Stratford Festival in Ontario. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 14-16, at 8; Saturday, Jan. 17, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Jan. 18, at 3.)

Beehive—A musical revue, featuring songs of the sixties. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7:30 and 10; and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 5.)

Forbidden Broadway—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Tentative schedule—Wednesday evening, Jan. 7: "Divertimento No. 15," "Quiet City," "Sonatine," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Jan. 8: "Scotch Symphony," "In G Major," and "Kammermusik No. 2." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Jan. 9: "Ballo della Regina," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Jan. 10: "La Source," "Quiet City," "Pas de Deux," and "Serenade." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Jan. 10: "Ballo della Regina," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Jan. 11: "Serenade," "Kammermusik No. 2," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, Jan. 11: "Symphony in C," "In G Major," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Jan. 13: "Swan Lake," "Quiet City," "Sonatine," and "Dances at a Gathering." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Jan. 14: "La Source," "Davidsbündlertänze," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Jan. 15: "Agon," an unnamed ballet (première), and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Jan. 16: "Divertimento No. 15," "Davidsbündlertänze," and "Scotch Symphony." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Jan. 17: "Swan Lake," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Jan. 17: "Divertimento No. 15," the new ballet, and "I'm Old Fashioned." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1. Through Sunday, Feb. 22.)

Ohad Naharin and Dancers—Performing "Tabula Rasa" and "Bez and a Half." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Wednesday through Saturday, Jan. 7-10, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3.)

Dance Through Time—A program of twentieth-century dances, including the foxtrot, the Charleston, the shag (a precursor of the jitterbug), and the funky chicken. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, W. 120th St. and Riverside Dr. 864-2929. Wednesday, Jan. 14, and Friday, Jan. 16, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 17-18, at 2.)

Joyce Theatre—A two-week series of appearances by eight contemporary dance companies—**ELEO POMARE DANCE COMPANY:** Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 8, and Saturday, Jan. 10, at 2. . . .

MARTA RENZI & THE PROJECT COMPANY: Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 2. . . . **ZE'EVA COHEN & DANCERS:** Friday, Jan. 9, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 7:30. . . . **REMY CHARLIP DANCES:** Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8. . . . **MITCHELL ROSE & DIANE EPSTEIN:** Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30, and Saturday, Jan. 17, at 2. . . . **DAVID PARSONS:** Wednesday, Jan. 14, and Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8. . . . **POOH KAYE/ECCENTRIC MOTIONS:** Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 18, at 2. . . . **KATHRYN POSIN DANCE COMPANY:** Friday, Jan. 16, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 18, at 7:30. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ABILENE CAFÉ, 359 Second Ave., at 21st St. (473-8908)—A corner bar and restaurant that offers ribs, liver, Bud, and several varieties of the blues. Organist **BROTHER JACK MC DUFF** is the guest of honor on Thursday, Jan. 8, and on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, tenor saxophonist **WILLIS (GATOR TAIL) JACKSON** pays a visit. Other bluespersons can be found here during the rest of the week. Music from nine.

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**MICHAEL FEINSTEIN,** the thirty-year-old singer, pianist, and Gershwin scholar, is performing for his admiring elders in the Oak Room. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A long, narrow, nautically appointed bar, restaurant, and jazz nook. Sea dogs account for a very small percentage of the clientele. Saxophonist John Richmond's trio holds forth on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, and on the following weekend, Jan. 16-17, guitarist **VIC JURIS'S** trio will be aboard. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** has a wee girl's voice but it is expressive and her diction is impeccable and the songs she chooses to sing ("I'm Hip," "My Attorney, Bernie," "Bye-Bye Country Boy," "Bruce") are perfectly suited to her. Her concerts begin at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays. At eleven on Fridays and Saturdays, Laurie Beechman, one of the cats in "Cats," sings contemporary pop and show tunes.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A large, carpeted, bemirrored jazz club with a spectacular piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with bright clusters of musicians on the dais. Fusion saxophonist Grover Washington, Jr., directs a combo through Sunday, Jan. 11; on Monday, Jan. 12, pianist Mark Puricelli brings in a quintet that features violinist **JOHN BLAKE** and saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE;** and on Tuesday, Jan. 13, suave bass-baritone **BILLY ECKSTINE** enters singing. Music after nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Music for many kinds of people, including unreconstructed folkies, electro-techno-jazz enthusiasts, urban cowboys, and rock-and-roll fundamentalists. The lineup: Wednesday, Jan. 7, **BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE** and Tom Chapin; Thursday, Jan. 8, violinist **MICHAL URBANIAK'S** Constellation; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, Garland Jeffreys; and Friday, Jan. 16, La Bamba & the Hubcaps. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar: it has dark wood panelling, Type A conversationalists, and some very good pianists (who play the very beautiful concert grand that Paul Desmond bequeathed to the proprietor) and bassists. **FRED HERSCH** and **MICHAEL FORMANEK** collaborate through Saturday, Jan. 10, and on Monday, Jan. 12, **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **RED MITCHELL** set sail. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. **CARRIE SMITH'S** deep, powerful voice can be heard here Thursday through Sunday, Jan. 8-11, and on Tuesday, Jan. 13, saxophonist **OLIVER LAKE** arrives with his quartet. On Mondays, **BUCKY** and **JOHN PIZZARELLI** play father-and-son guitar duets. Sets at nine and eleven, with an extra show at twelve-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Wednesday, Jan. 7.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The soft-hued, languorous murals in the Café Carlyle are by Marcel Vertès, and the sprightly jazz is by **GEORGE SHEARING** (piano and vocals) and **DON THOMPSON** (bass). Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, Ludwig Bemelmans' rabbits perform everyday stunts on the walls and **BARBARA CARROLL** sings and plays the piano Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-forty-five.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The diminutive, lightly swinging **MAXINE SULLIVAN** is singing in this velvet-and-mirror-walled music box through Sunday, Jan. 11, with a quintet led by tenor saxophonist **SCOTT HAMILTON.** Starting Tuesday, Jan. 13, two quintets headed by two fine trumpeters, **JON FADDIS** and **TOM HARRELL,** will take turns on the bandstand. Mondays are the property of guitarist and recording innovator **LES PAUL** and his trio. Music from eight Tuesdays through Sundays, and from nine on Mondays. Dining.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A cathedral-size bar and restaurant where you can hear and see (but from the bar you may want to use binoculars) good pianists. Through Saturday, Jan. 10, **HAL SCHAEFER;** Sunday, Jan. 11, Michael Weiss; Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 12-13, John Weiss; Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 14-15, Chuck Fowler; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 16-17, **BROOKS KERR** (with bassist Al Hall). Sets begin at seven Mondays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays, and at six on Sundays. Dining.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—A tiny jazz outpost in swinging-singles country. Wednesdays through Sundays, Carla White sings with accompaniment from pianist Peter Madsen and bassist Peter Barshay; Mondays are set aside for vocalist Stan Edwards and his support crew; and Tuesdays are given over to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. All these groups begin at about ten.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant, low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **ROGER KELLAWAY,** a dashing, versatile pianist and a flashy dresser, works with **JAY LEONHART** through Saturday, Jan. 10, and on Tuesday, Jan. 13, **JOHN BUNCH** and **PHIL FLANIGAN** swing into action. On Sundays and Mondays, the keyboard is in the hands of Esther Blue. Music from about nine-thirty.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof of this establishment; Texans like the reminders of home; and the musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. Wednesday, Jan. 7, and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, the **RADIATORS;** Thursday, Jan. 8, **JORMA KAUKONEN,** Max Creek, and others; Sunday and Monday, Jan. 11-12, the Heaters and Ilene Kristen; Tuesday, Jan. 13, bluegrass pioneer **BILL MONROE;** Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 14-15, the grizzled but unbowed **JERRY LEE LEWIS;** and Friday, Jan. 16, Soul Brother No. 1, **JAMES BROWN.** Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—The New York Jazz Repertory Ensemble, a septet led by banjoist Eddy Davis, is reviving the music of Spike Jones, the jocular drummer and bandleader who had a big hit in 1942 with "Der Fuehrer's Face" and whose performances featured such things as a goat trained to bleat on cue. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Closed Sundays.

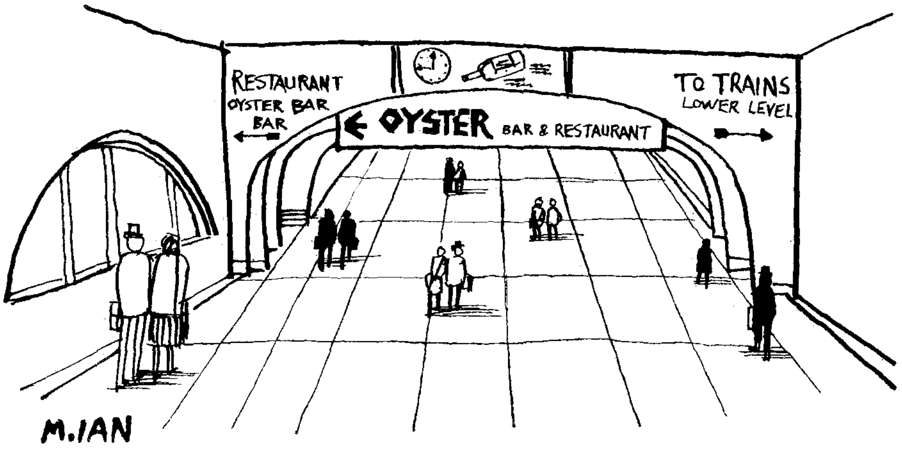
RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and, occasionally, of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 7-8, **LOU REED** and the **DEL-LORDS;** Friday, Jan. 9, the Lyres and Christmas; Saturday, Jan. 10, Bruce Willis & the Heaters; and Friday, Jan. 16, Johnny Thunders. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

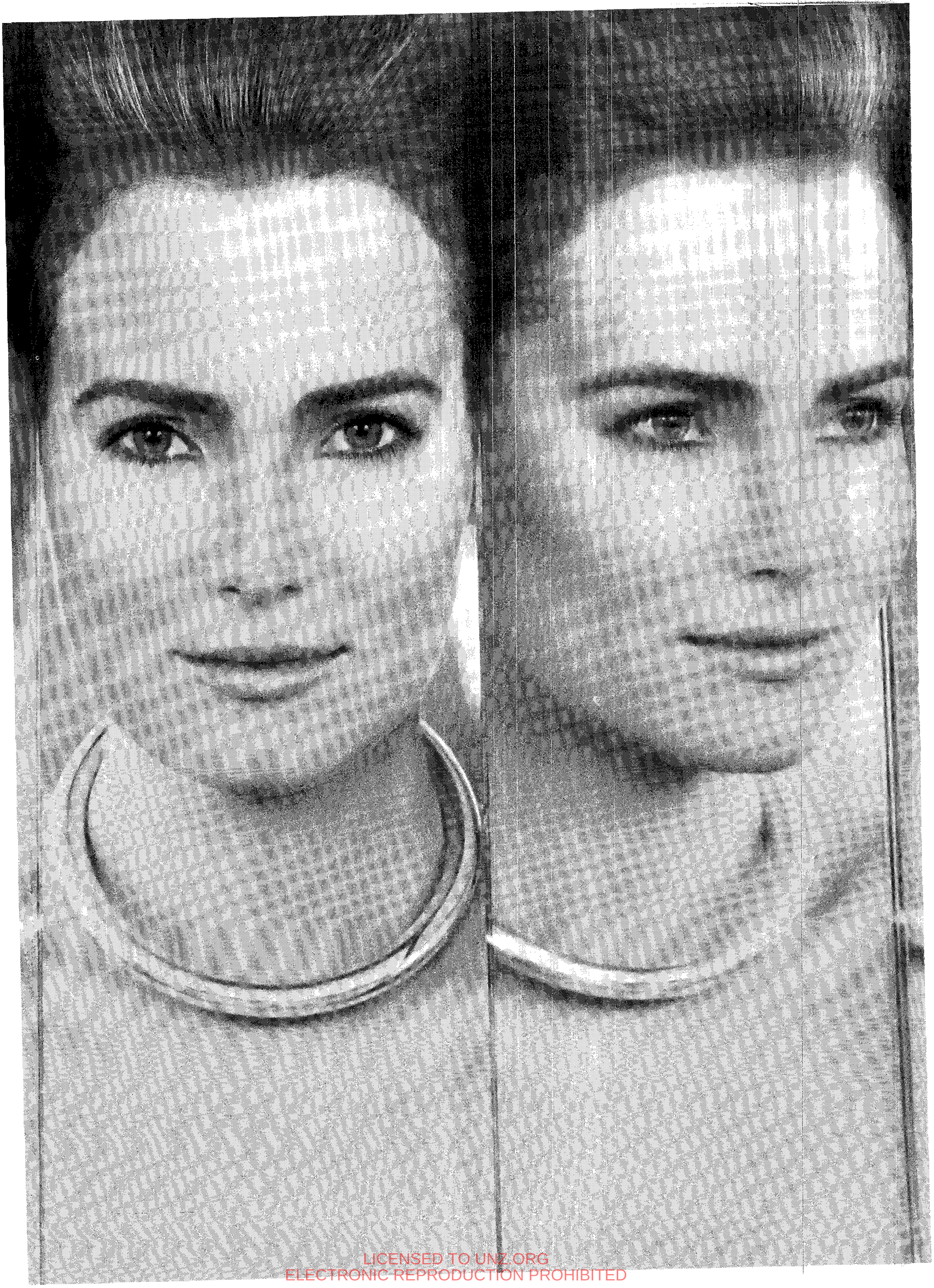
SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Tropical-forest décor (including a larger-than-life parrot suspended above the bandstand) and head-swirling music from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and the U.S.A. Wednesday, Jan. 7, Redemption Posse, a reggae outfit from Miami; Thursday, Jan. 8, percussionist **DUDUCA FONSECA'S** Brazilian All-Stars; Friday, Jan. 9, **MIKATA;** Saturday, Jan. 10, and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 16-17, **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Tuesday, Jan. 13, Mario Toledo and Choros; Wednesday, Jan. 14, reggae vocalist **PABLO MOSES;** and Thursday, Jan. 15, funky vibraharpist **ROY AYERS.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

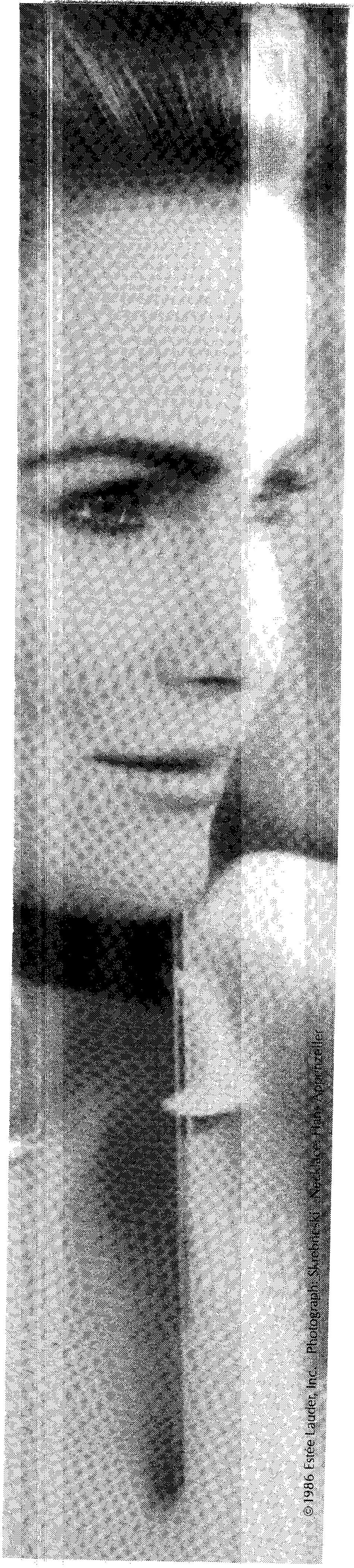
SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A bustling knotty-pine-and-brick-walled jazz room. The driving, incantatory pianist **MC COY TYNER** performs with bassist **AVERY SHARPE** and drummer **LOUIS HAYES** Tuesdays through Sundays. On Mondays, the bandstand is extended to accommodate the **GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA,** whose ranks usually include roof-raising soloists such as **CHRIS HUNTER** (alto sax), **GEORGE ADAMS** (tenor sax), and **HOWARD JOHNSON** (baritone sax, tuba, and penny whistle). Music from about ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple basic blues and rock club, now a venerable ten years old. Wednesday, Jan. 7, the **ELLIOTT MURPHY** band; Thursday, Jan. 8, Moving Targets and Lemonheads; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Sunday, Jan. 11, the Tall Lonesome Pines and the Surreal McCoys; Monday, Jan. 12, the Homewreckers; Tuesday, Jan. 13, the Greg Trooper band and the Riffkings; Wednesday, Jan. 14, the Cor-Vairs and the Jimmys; Thursday, Jan. 15, Sea Monster; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 16-17, **OTIS RUSH.** Shows after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—The Terrace Bar features a little fireplace, in







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Triple Creme Skin Rehydrator

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Cold wind. Dry heat. Stress and more stress. We can't make life easier. But we can certainly help your skin cope. Triple Creme Skin Rehydrator provides an innovative delivery system to supply and bind moisture to the skin. Laboratory tests show that fifteen minutes after use, skin's water content is increased by 70% — that's twice the effect of an ordinary emulsion system.

It all begins with water that is encapsulated in emollient oil, then surrounded by more water. This water/oil/water complex keeps skin soft, moist and supple for over 20 hours after a ten-minute application.
Use Triple Creme Skin Rehydrator twice a week or any time your skin is under stress. It makes facing a hard-edged world just a little softer.

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which little urban fires sometimes burn, and reliable—and sometimes incandescent—duos and trios. **JOANNE BRACKEEN**—a deft, baroque pianist who seems to burrow into whatever she plays (standards or, more often, her own dense, darting compositions) rather than float through it waving to bystanders—works with bassist **CLINT HOUSTON** every night but Monday, when pianist **HILTON RUIZ'S** trio is on duty. On Tuesdays, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio, which plays everything from Scott Joplin rags to Miles Davis blues, is also present. Music from around ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now fifty-one years old, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise proprietor and resident father figure, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Bassist **RICHARD DAVIS** leads his quintet (trumpeter **CECIL BRIDGEWATER,** tenor saxophonist **RICKY FORD,** pianist **ROLAND HANNA,** and drummer **FREDDIE WAITS**) through Sunday, Jan. 11, and on Tuesday, Jan. 13, the Monk-inspired quartet **SPHERE** begins a six-night residence. Mondays are *Blast-Off Nights* for the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA.** Music from ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machine and the EnduroRacer and the jukebox (now an accessory to the video screen above it) is a room full of jazz, blues, and comedy. The lineup: through Sunday, Jan. 11, vocalist **AL HIBBLER** (whose whoops and wobbles Duke Ellington described as "tonal pantomime"), with the Ronnie Cole trio; Tuesday, Jan. 13, singer Shelley Ya-Ya; and starting Wednesday, Jan. 14, guitarist **DOM MINASI'S** quartet. Mondays are comedy nights. Music from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. Pianist Peter Malinverni and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** work together through Saturday, Jan. 10, and on Monday, Jan. 12, the debonair, light-fingered **ELLIS LARKINS** slips onto the piano bench. On Sundays, Mr. Moore and guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI,** a duo for over a decade, play quietly fervent, highly melodic, room-stilling jazz. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

TURK MURPHY AND JIM CULLUM—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8.

BUCKY AND JOHN PIZZARELLI—Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8.

JORDAN SANDKE QUARTET—Vineyard Theatre. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3.

KAMIKAZE GROUND CREW—Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 12-13, at 8.

WALTER THOMPSON BIG BAND—Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ—With Astrud Gilberto, Claudio Roditi, Niels Lan Doky, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8. For information about tickets, call 598-2027.)

SARAH VAUGHAN—With Stanley Turrentine. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

FRANCISCO ALVARADO-JUÁREZ—Paintings and constructions. Through Jan. 25. (Musco del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

ALAN FELTUS—Recent paintings of women in groups. Through Jan. 28. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

CHERYL GOLDSLEGER / KAREN RIEDENER—Monochromatic paintings and drawings with mazelike

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arrangements of such architectural forms as chairs and stairs. / Photographs. Through Jan. 30. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

JULES OLITSKI / WINSLOW HOMER (1836-1910)—Impasto paintings on sheets of shaped Plexiglas. Through Jan. 31. / Paintings, drawings, and prints, all of which are monochromatic. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

BARBARA SCHWARTZ—Painted cast-aluminum wall reliefs. Through Jan. 31. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

GROUP SHOW—"The Layered Image," paintings, constructions, and photographs by Christopher Hewat, Roberto Juarez, Barbara Kruger, Bruce Kurland, Justen Ladda, and Suzan Pitt. Through Wednesday, Jan. 14. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

MILTON AVERY (1893-1965)—Seascapes on canvas and on paper. Through Jan. 31. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

ISABEL BISHOP—Drawings and etchings that date from the twenties to the forties but have not been on exhibition before now. Through Saturday, Jan. 17. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

LOUISE BOURGEOIS / ANDY WARHOL—Paintings *from the forties. / Photographs. Through Jan.* 31. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

GEORGE CONSTANT (1892-1978)—Watercolors of landscapes, still-lifes, and figures. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

JOSEPH CORNELL (1903-72)—Box constructions and collages that were in the artist's personal collection. Through Jan. 31. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

SONIA DELAUNAY (1885-1979)—Lithographs from the sixties and seventies. Through Jan. 23. (Zarre, 41 E. 57th St.)

CHUCK DUGAN—Abstract paintings. Through Jan. 29. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

MAURICE GOLUBOV—Works from the past five years or so, including nonobjective and figurative paintings. Through Jan. 29. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

CLEVE GRAY—Paintings from the past fifty years in a show that complements the artist's retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum. Through Feb. 3. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

ODILON REDON (1840-1916)—About thirty prints. Through Feb. 14. (Fitch-Febvrel, 5 E. 57th St.)

BRUCE ROBBINS—Recent works on paper. Through Jan. 31. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

BEN SHAHN (1898-1969)—Prints, drawings, and watercolors. Through Jan. 30. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

SUSAN SHATTER—Landscape paintings in oils and watercolors. Through Jan. 28. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

STILL-LIFE SWAP—A painting apiece by four still-life specialists—Janet Fish, Sondra Freckelton, Nancy Hagin, and Harriet Shorr—who, after appearing together on a panel on still-life last spring, conceived a project wherein each would do a work that depicted objects proposed by the others. The paintings all include a pair of amber candlesticks, a blue plate, a fish-shaped vase, and a ceramic pitcher. Through Jan. 31. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **GALERIE ST. ETIENNE,** 24 W. 57th St.: Works by Oskar Kokoschka and his contemporaries. Through Jan. 31. . . . **LAMAGNA,** 50 W. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and prints—selected for their "appeal to the psychic self," say the curators—by *John Buck, Harry X Ball, Louise Bourgeois,* Charles Luce, Matt Mullican, Elaine Reichek, John Cage, and Lesley Dill. Through Jan. 24. . . . **HOLLY SOLOMON,** 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Paintings, drawings, and sculptures that either use text as images or combine text with images. Saul Steinberg, Laurie Anderson, Jonathan Borofsky, Crash, and Judy Pfaff are among the forty-two artists represented. Through Saturday, Jan. 10.

GALLERIES—SoHo

PAUL GEORGES—Recent paintings chronicling a move from a summer house in Long Island to one in France, and works with classical subjects—Perseus vs. Medusa, for instance. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

THOMAS GRUENEBAUM—Collage paintings by an art dealer. Through Feb. 7. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

DAVID HARE—Freestanding wood, bronze, and steel sculptures. Through Jan. 31. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

EDWARD KOREN—Monoprints of this artist's distinctive creatures—the hairy ones. Through Jan. 30. (Solo Press, 578 Broadway. Open Mondays.)

CLAUDIO PARMIGGIANI—Sculptural works incorporating plaster casts of classical heads, sometimes painted, with gold-colored frames, panes of glass, vases, and other bric-a-brac. Through Saturday, Jan. 17. (Totah, 152 Wooster St.)

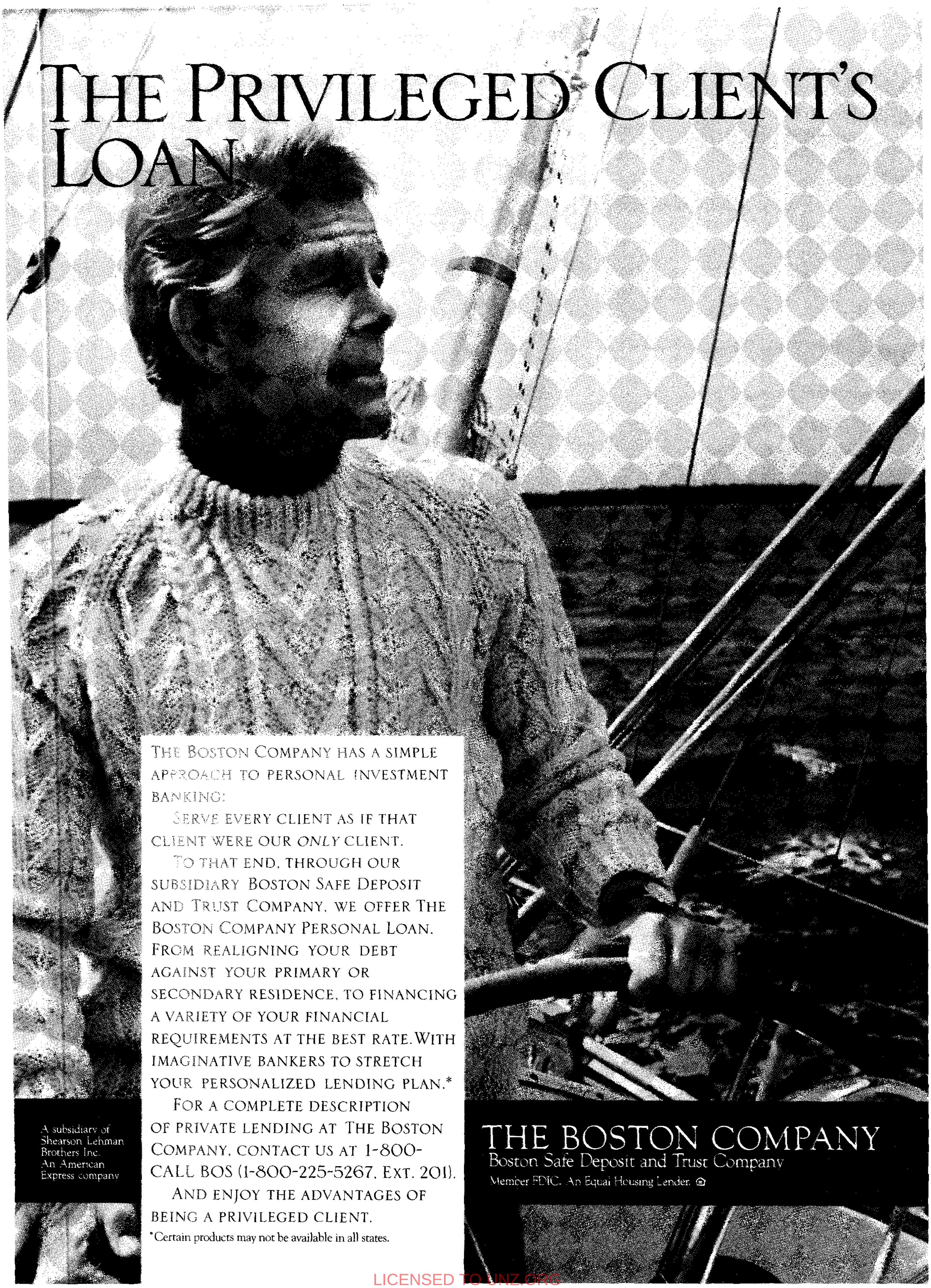
ERNEST SHAW—Sculptures from his "Votive" series and his "Guardian" series. Through Jan. 29. (Viafora, 568 Broadway.)

JOAN WITEK—Oil pastels on paper. Through Jan. 31. (Davis, 568 Broadway.)

GROUP SHOWS—At **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 35 Wooster St.: Abstractions predominate in a show of works by ten artists. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **HOFFMAN,** 429 West Broadway: Drawings and watercolors by nineteen artists, including Carolyn Brady, Bill Richards, and John Okulick. Through Wednesday, Jan. 14.

OTHER GALLERIES

JOE HOUSTON—Small paintings of chasms and waterfalls and calendar-style landscapes, all done with a surrealist edge and framed in wood, often irregular in shape. Through Sunday, Jan. 11. (P.P.O.W, 337 E. 8th St., near



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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Avenue C. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel—An engrossing installation involving an artificial lagoon, whirling fans, a spinning ball, and other eyecatching devices. Through Jan. 24. (Art Galaxy, 262 Mott St., just south of Houston St.)

Philip Reisman—A survey of paintings from 1933 to 1986. Through Jan. 24. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Opens at noon.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Gary Brotmeyer / Helen Levitt—The artist alters the characters in old portraits by, for instance, sticking on hair or adding bottle caps as helmets. Several of the works have side panels that provide a sort of context—words or drawings—for the characters. / Photographs of New York from the past forty years. Through Jan. 24. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

Alfred Eisenstaedt / David Seymour (Chim) (1911-56)—A retrospective. / Works from the thirties, including prints of the Spanish Civil War. Through Sunday, Jan. 11. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Nicholas Nixon / Gustave Le Gray (1820-82)—Recent photographs of his family and of elderly people. / Photographs of seascapes and trees. Through Saturday, Jan. 17. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Doug Prince and Leonard Sussman—Italian landscapes: prints made from multiple negatives by the former, showing flowers and plants superimposed on landscapes and architecture; photographs of Tuscany and Umbria by the latter. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Edward Steichen (1879-1973)—Photographs from the first half of this century. Through Jan. 24. (Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. Opens at noon.)

James Van DerZee (1886-1983)—Vintage prints of life in Harlem. Through Saturday, Jan. 10. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

Group Shows—At the **wolf,** 30 W. 57th St.: The gallery's last public exhibition is a selection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographs chosen by contemporary critics, curators, and collectors. Through Saturday, Jan. 17. (Open Mondays.) . . . **zabriskie,** 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: In honor of the tenth anniversary of the Galerie Zabriskie in Paris, vintage prints by French artists (Brassaï, Atget, Brancusi among them) who have been exhibited in the Zabriskie galleries in both New York and Paris. Through Saturday, Jan. 17. (Open Mondays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers," a show of paintings and drawings covering the artist's last fifteen months. Through March 22. . . . ¶ "Dance" is the theme of the Costume Institute's show of men's and women's evening dress and accessories. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A show of scale models, photographs, and drawings by Swiss architect Mario Botta. Through Feb. 10. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works on paper by Jean Dubuffet. Through Tuesday, Jan. 13. . . . ¶ Prints by Odilon Redon. Through Feb. 3. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A monumental sculpture of a ship in the form of a Swiss Army knife, which was conceived by Claes Oldenburg, Coosje van Bruggen, and Frank O. Gehry. The sculpture has moving parts, including eight "oars." Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by Oskar Kokoschka. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of works by John Storrs, early modernist sculptor, containing, in addition to sculptures, his paintings, drawings, and prints. Through March 22. . . . ¶ Mary Lucier's 1983 video "Ohio at Giverny" (18½ minutes) is showing continuously in the lobby gallery through Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Machine Age in America 1918-1941," a display of paintings, sculptures, photographs, decorative objects, and appliances that reflect the fascination the machine held for American artists and designers during the period of the great industrial leaps between the World Wars. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ An exhibit documenting the influence of Post-Impressionism on American and Canadian painters in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Thomas Hart Benton, Stuart Davis, and Emily Carr are among the artists represented. Through Jan. 19. . . . ¶ A retrospective show of works on paper by abstractionist Cleve Gray. Through Feb. 23. (A complementary show of paintings is at the Armstrong Gallery, 50 W. 57th St.) (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of late-Ice Age art (which has been called "the childhood of art but not the art of children"), consisting of a hundred decorated stone, ivory, and bone objects, including the characteristic statuettes known as little Venuses. Also, a reconstruction of a hut made with mammoth bones. Through Jan. 18. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Handmade fine- and applied-art objects in a blazing show that befits the opening of a new home for this museum. Through March 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—"Art of Japan, Selections from the Burke Collection, Part II," scroll paintings, folding screens, calligraphy, and lacquerware. Through Feb. 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The main show, "Berlin 1900-1933: Architecture and Design," includes mass-produced objects (fans, kettles, porcelains), plus drawings and some familiar chairs, by Breuer, Mies van der Rohe, Behrens, and others. Through Jan. 25. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A display elucidating the European tradition of mounting rare Japanese and Chinese porcelains with gold, silver, and gilt bronze. Through March 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A display of works that have entered the collections recently—drawings by Mantegna, Mondrian, and others; illuminated manuscripts; books; literary and music manuscripts; and a copy of the first printing of the Declaration of Independence. Through Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show of installations that Hans Haacke has done during the past fifteen years, criticizing policies of the Reagan Administration, corporate sponsorship of the arts, and the influences of the advertising world upon our culture. A painted portrait of Ronald Reagan, for instance, is juxtaposed with a large photomural of antinuclear demonstrations. Through Feb. 15. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays, noon to 10; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

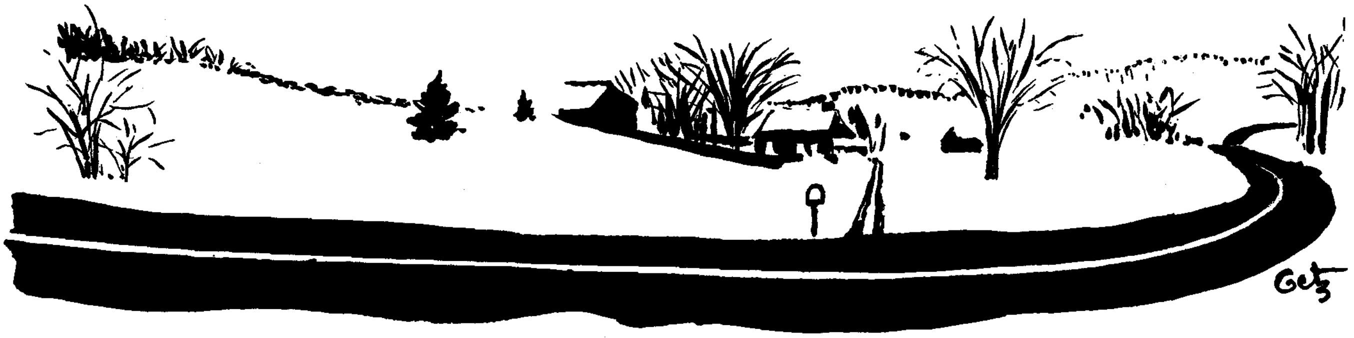
New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A display of antique toys—Teddy bears and dolls, including a Shirley Temple doll; trains, including a girl's freight-train set; cars, including a knockout six-foot replica of a Packard; games, including a yacht-race game, circa 1891, called Newport—from the Lawrence Scripps Wilkinson Collection. Through March 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—This magazine's first cover and more than a hundred other *New Yorker* covers and cartoons are on view in their original form in the Second Floor Gallery through Jan. 31. (Open daily except Sundays. Hours: Mondays through Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ From the Berg Collection: an exhibit of letters and literary works by English and American women writers from the eighteenth century to the present. (Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—



Eleanor Antin (performance), Thursday and Friday, Jan. 15-16, at 8:30.

Note—Barbara Allen in "The Troubles of Therese," Fridays and Saturdays, Jan. 9-10 and Jan. 16-17, at 11. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall [formerly Carnegie Recital Hall] 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 8: "La Bohème," with Hei-Kyung Hong, Myra Merritt, Peter Dvorsky, and Arthur Thompson; conducted by Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Renata Scotto, Ariel Bybee, Vyacheslav Polosov, and Lenus Carlson; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 9, at 8: "Die Fledermaus," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, Brenda Boozer, Vinson Cole, and Vernon Hartman; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 10, at 2: "Rigoletto," with Mariella Devia, Isola Jones, Dano Raffanti, and Sherrill Milnes; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8: "La Bohème," with Hei-Kyung Hong, Myra Merritt, Peter Dvorsky, and Arthur Thompson; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Sunday, Jan. 11, at 6:30: Excerpts from "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Rigoletto," and "La Traviata," with Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti, and Leo Nucci; Richard Bonynge. (A performance to benefit the Metropolitan Opera Pension Fund.). . . ¶ Monday, Jan. 12, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Renata Scotto, Ariel Bybee, Peter Dvorsky, and Lenus Carlson; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Gwendolyn Bradley, Isola Jones, Dano Raffanti, and Sherrill Milnes; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 8: "Die Fledermaus," with Kay Griffel, Gail Dobish, Brenda Boozer, Vinson Cole, and Vernon Hartman; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 15, at 7:30: "Tannhäuser," with Jessye Norman, Eva Randova, Richard Cassilly, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 16, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Gwendolyn Bradley, Isola Jones, Dano Raffanti, and Sherrill Milnes; Thomas Fulton. (A non-subscription performance.) . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 17, at 2: "Madame Butterfly," with Renata Scotto, Ariel Bybee, Peter Dvorsky, and Lenus Carlson; Thomas Fulton. (A non-subscription performance.). . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8: "Die Fledermaus," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, Tatiana Troyanos, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; Jeffrey Tate. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Mannes Camerata—Final performances of two medieval music dramas: "Herod" and "Slaughter of the Innocents." Staged and conducted by Paul C. Echols. (Christ Church United Methodist, Park Ave. at 60th St. Wednesday, Jan. 7, and Friday through Sunday, Jan. 9-11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 595-1747.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "Die Fledermaus," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 7:30, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 2:30.)

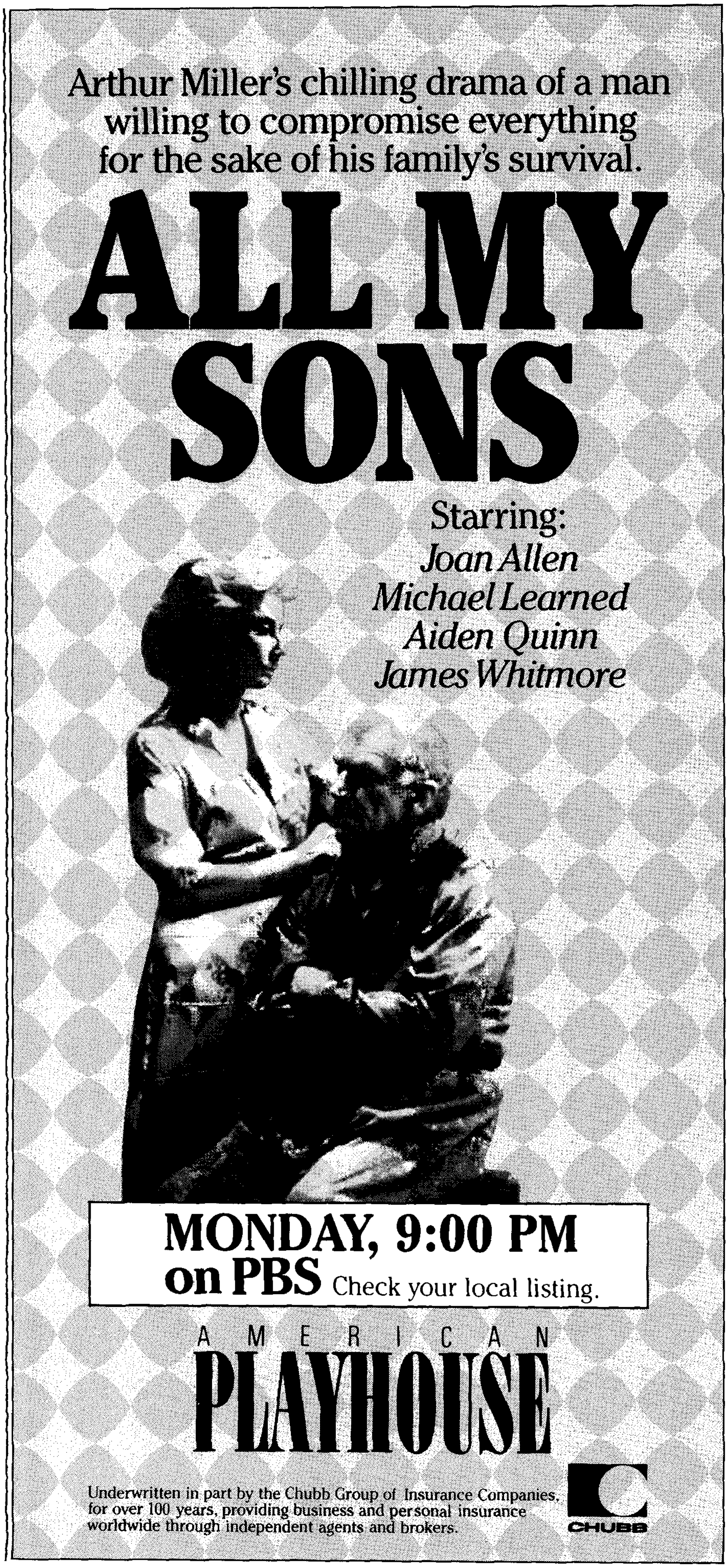
ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Erich Leinsdorf conducting—Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8; Friday, Jan. 9, at 2; Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8; and Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30: A Strauss-Debussy-Schumann program; no soloists. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 15-17, at 8, and Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 7:30: A Mozart-Strauss-Beethoven program, with Judith LeClair, bassoon, and Stanley Drucker, clarinet. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducting, with Frederica von Stade, mezzo-soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Julius Rudel conducting, with Jorge Bolet, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting—The New York première (postponed from November) of William Bolcom's "Songs of Innocence and of Experience: A Musical


Arthur Miller's chilling drama of a man willing to compromise everything for the sake of his family's survival.

ALL MY SONS

Starring:
Joan Allen
Michael Learned
Aiden Quinn
James Whitmore

MONDAY, 9:00 PM
on PBS Check your local listing.

AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE

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CHUBB

Illumination of the Poems of William Blake," with eight soloists; three choruses; jazz, folk, and rock ensembles; and a narrator. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 9-10, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 2.) . . . ¶ The first in a series of four "Meet the Moderns" programs, this one with Henry Schuman, oboe, and Steven D. Hartman, clarinet. (Brooklyn Academy of Music. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8. . . . Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Jan. 16, at 8.) For information about tickets, call 1-718 636-4120.

New York Chamber Symphony of the 92nd Street Y—Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3: Yan Pascal Tortelier conducting a program of French music, with Bella Davidovich, piano, and Paul Ingraham, horn. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8: Kenneth Jean conducting a program of baroque music, with Margaret Chalker, soprano; Ben Holt, baritone; and Andres Diaz, cello.

American Composers Orchestra—Dennis Russell Davies conducting a program of music by John Adams, William Bolcom, Francis Thorne, and Duke Ellington. With Sergiu Luca, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler directing a performance of Verdi's "La Battaglia di Legnano" in concert form, with Aprile Millo, soprano; Mario Malagnini, tenor; Matteo Manuguerra, baritone; and Jerome Hines, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, Jan. 12, at 8.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

Vienna Choir Boys—Lawrence Ewashko directing. (Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 960-8833. Friday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

Collegiate Chorale—Robert Bass directing the chorus and orchestra in Brahms' Requiem, with Benita Valente, soprano, and Richard Stilwell, baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8.)

RECITALS

Guarneri Quartet—With George Shirley, tenor, and Claude Frank, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 8.) . . . ¶ With Samuel Rhodes, viola, and Joel Krosnick, cello. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8.)

Empire Brass—Works by Scarlatti, Bach, Ravel, Bernstein, and others. (Weill Recital Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 8.)

Benjamin Luxon and Bill Crofut—Baritone and banjoist, with assisting artists in a program of American and British songs. (Weill Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8.)

Waverly Consort—Music of medieval Iberia, with George Mgrdichian, oud. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Jan. 8, and Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8.)

Early Music at the Vineyard Theatre—Two ensembles performing on period instruments—Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8: Vineyardmusik presenting eighteenth-century French music. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 9, at 8: Music for a While performing medieval music. (309 E. 26th St. 683-0696.)

Chamber Players of the League-ISCM—With guest artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Jan. 8, at 8.)

Isaac Stern and Friends—The violinist and assisting artists. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, Jan. 9, at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—With Kyung-Wha Chung, violin. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, Jan. 9, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, at 5.)

Samuel Ramey—Bass, with Warren Jones, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Jan. 9, at 8.)

Lilian Kallir, Peter Oundjian, and Leslie Parnas—Piano, violin, and cello, in an all-Beethoven program. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 3.)

Mary Ann Hart—Mezzo-soprano, with Dennis Helmrich, piano, in a one-hour recital of American songs. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 5. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

Thruston Johnson—Violin, with David Garvey, piano, and Whitney Tustin, oboe. (Weill Recital Hall. Saturday, Jan. 10, at 8:30.)

New Sounds—The last in a series of concerts, this one will present works by cellist Eugene Friesen, pianist Paul Sullivan, percussionist Glen Velez, and electronic-music artist Denny Zeitlin, performed in ensemble by the composers. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 2.)

North/South Consonance Ensemble—Max Lifchitz conducting a program that includes works by Orlando Garcia, Laura Greenberg, and Josef Alexander, all of whom will be present. (St. Stephen's Church, 122 W. 69th St. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Gerald Ranck—Harpsichord, in an all-Bach program. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 3:30. No tickets necessary.)

Odyssey Chamber Players—With Charles Abramovic, piano. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 5. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Andrée Juliette Brun—Piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Monday, Jan. 12, at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—With Cynthia Rose, mezzo-soprano, and Linda Moss, viola. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, Jan. 12, at 8.)

Christopher O'Riley—Piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8.)

Group for Contemporary Music—With Garrick Ohlsson, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—A concert featuring Leon Kirchner performing a Mozart sonata with violinist Jaime Laredo and conducting an ensemble in a performance of his Double Concerto for Violin, Cello, Winds, and Percussion, with Mr. Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson as soloists. (92nd Street Y. Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 13-14, at 8.)

Gervase de Peyer—Clarinet, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 8.)

Ridge String Quartet and Jeffrey Kahane—Performing a string quartet, a piano quartet, and a piano quintet. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 8.)

Consort of Musicke—In a program of seventeenth-century English and Italian music. (Weill Recital Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 8.)

Sol Greitzer—Viola, with assisting artists. (92nd Street Y. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8.)

Judith Norell—Harpsichord. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8.)

Ronald Sadoff—Piano. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

New York Trumpet Ensemble—Performing Italian music, with Lucy Shelton, soprano, and Edward Brewer, harpsichord and organ. (Weill Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8.)

Kronos Quartet—The first in a series of three concerts. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Works by Mendelssohn, Dvořák, and Brahms will be offered at this third in a series of four concerts. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Jan. 17, at 3.)

Spoleto Festival Chamber Music at BAM—Jaime Laredo, violin; Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano; and the Ridge String Quartet. The second in a series of seven concerts. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Ida Levin and Todd Phillips, violin; Steven Tenenbom and Barbara Westphal, viola; and Peter Wiley and Charles Curtis, cello. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

William Bolcom and Joan Morris—Piano and mezzo-soprano. (Weill Recital Hall. Saturday, Jan. 17, at 8:30.)

Note—Louis Bagger, harpsichord, will give a recital at the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Sunday, Jan. 25, at 5. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, Jan. 12, in the order that written applications are received on that day (not before). A self-addressed, stamped envelope should be enclosed.

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Washington Bullets, Wednesday, Jan. 7; Portland Trailblazers, Friday, Jan. 9; Boston Celtics, Tuesday, Jan. 13; and Detroit Pistons, Saturday, Jan. 17. (Games begin at 7:30.) . . . **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Sacramento Kings, Saturday, Jan. 10, at 7:30, and Dallas Mavericks, Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30.

Football—Giants vs. Washington Redskins, for the National Football Conference Championship. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Sunday, Jan. 11, at 4.)

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 7:35; Islanders, Friday, Jan. 9, at 7:35; and Vancouver Canucks, Sunday, Jan. 11, at 7:35. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Quebec Nordiques, Thursday, Jan. 8, at 7:35; Vancouver Canucks, Saturday, Jan. 10, at 1:35; Hartford Whalers, Monday, Jan. 12, at 7:35; and Winnipeg Jets, Friday, Jan. 16, at 7:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Saturday, Jan. 10, at 7:05; Pittsburgh Penguins, Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 8:05; Washington Capitals, Thursday, Jan. 15, at 8:05; and Philadelphia Flyers, Saturday, Jan. 17, at 5:05.

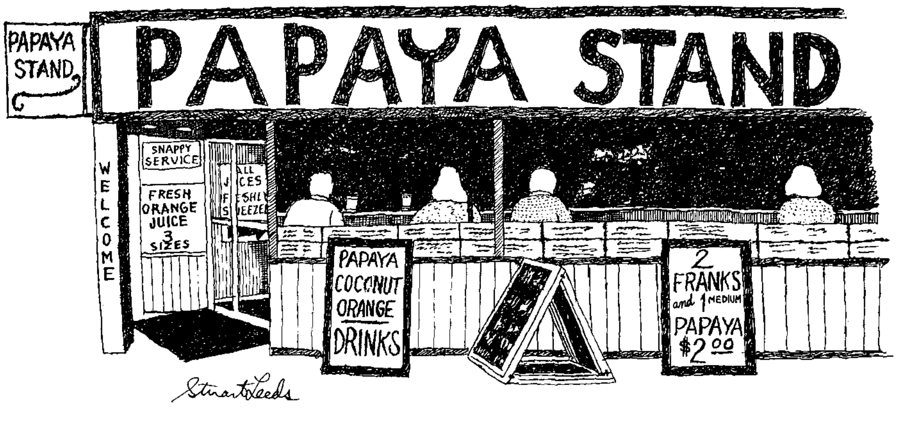
Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30.

Trotting—At **roosevelt raceway:** Nightly at 7:30, from Thursday, Jan. 8, through Sunday, March 15. . . . **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 8, from Friday, Jan. 9, through Saturday, Aug. 15.

ET ALIA

Prose Readings—*Buchi Emecheta reading from her own works.* (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Jan. 12, at 8.)

Boat Show—More than six hundred sail and power boats, plus engines and boat accessories. (Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, 11th Ave. between 34th and 39th Sts. Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 7-9, from noon to 10; Saturday, Jan. 10, from 10 to 10; and Sunday, Jan. 11, from 11 to 7.)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FRESH ORANGE JUICE 3 SIZES
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2 FRANKS and 1 MEDIUM PAPAYA $2.00
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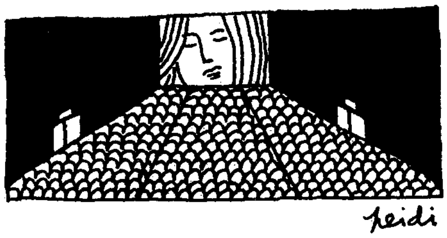
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 16.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Jan. 15: (Separate admissions) "Once Upon a Time in the West" (1969; directed by Sergio Leone), with Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, and Jason Robards; and "The Leopard" (†).
From Jan. 16: A festival of films from New Yorker Films.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 2: "Brighton Beach Memoirs" (Gene Saks), with Blythe Danner, Bob Dishy, Judith Ivey, and Jonathan Silverman.
Theatre 3: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Little Shop of Horrors" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Morning After" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "Three Amigos!" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.
Theatre 3: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Crimes of the Heart" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Morning After" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 8: "Heartbreak Ridge" (†). From Jan. 9: "Assassination" (Peter Hunt), with Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Wisdom" (Emilio Estevez), with Estevez and Demi Moore.
Theatre 2: "Native Son" (Jerrold Freedman), with Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth McGovern, and Victor Love.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Round Midnight" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Miss Mary" (Maria Luisa Bemberg), with Julie Christie.
Theatre 2: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 2: "Three Amigos!" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Little Shop of Horrors" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Platoon" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through Jan. 8: "Rouge Baiser" (Vera Belmont; in French), with Charlotte Valandrey.
From Jan. 9: "My Sweet Little Village" (Jiří Menzel; a Czech film).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Brighton Beach Memoirs" (Gene Saks), with Blythe Danner, Bob Dishy, Judith Ivey, and Jonathan Silverman.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Three Amigos!" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 8: "Heartbreak Ridge" (†). From Jan. 9: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"The Morning After" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "The City and the Dogs" (1985; directed by Francisco J. Lombardi; in Spanish), with Pablo Serra.
Theatre 2: "Mona Lisa" (†).

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 8: "Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin. From Jan. 9: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 8: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†). From Jan. 9: (Separate admissions) "Sherman's March" (Ross McElwee); and "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Morning After" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"True Stories" (†).

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 2: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Room with a View" (†).
Theatre 4: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.
Theatre 3: "Wisdom" (Emilio Estevez), with Estevez and Demi Moore.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Wisdom" (Emilio Estevez), with Estevez and Demi Moore.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sid and Nancy" (Alex Cox), with Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Decline of the American Empire" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Brighton Beach Memoirs" (Gene Saks), with Blythe Danner, Bob Dishy, Judith Ivey, and Jonathan Silverman.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 2: "Thérèse" (Alain Cavalier; in French), with Catherine Mouchet.
Theatre 3: "Men . . ." (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "El Amor Brujo" (Carlos Saura; in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Ménage" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "The Morning After" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Room with a View" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Little Shop of Horrors" (†).
Theatre 2: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 3: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 4: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 5: "Three Amigos!" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.
Theatre 6: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Round Midnight" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 8: (Matinées only) "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Down by Law" (†). From Jan. 9: "Assassination" (Peter Hunt), with Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 8: (Matinées only) "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton; and (evenings only) "The Color of Money" (†). From Jan. 9: "The Kindred" (Jeffrey Obrow and Stephen Carpenter), with David Allen Brooks.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 8: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon. From Jan. 9: (Matinées only) "Lady and the Tramp" and (evenings only) "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 8: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From Jan. 9: (Matinées only) "An American Tail" and (evenings only) "Crocodile Dundee."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 8: "King Kong Lives" (directed by John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton. From Jan. 9: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 8: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film. From Jan. 9: To be announced.
Theatre 4: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 5: "Little Shop of Horrors" (†).
Theatre 6: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 3: "Native Son" (Jerrold Freedman),

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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with Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth McGovern, and Victor Love.
Theatre 4: “Native Son.”

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B’way. (869-8340)
“Platoon” (†).

Loews State 1 and 2, B’way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: “Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home” (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: “The Golden Child” (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

New Embassy 49th Street, 49th St. near Seventh Ave. (757-7003)
“Lady and the Tramp” (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon. (No performances Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 12-13.)

R.K.O. National Twin, B’way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: “The Mosquito Coast” (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 2: “The Morning After” (†).

R.K.O. Warner Twin, B’way at 47th. (315-8425)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 8: “Heartbreak Ridge” (†). From Jan. 9: “The Kindred” (Jeffrey Obrow and Stephen Carpenter), with David Allen Brooks.
Theatre 2: “No Mercy” (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B’way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 8: “The Boy Who Could Fly” (Nick Castle). From Jan. 9: “Assassination” (Peter Hunt), with Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland.
Theatre 2: “Three Amigos!” (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Jan. 8: “The Exterminating Angel” (1962; directed by Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Silvia Pinal; and “Leonor” (1974; Juan Buñuel), with Liv Ullmann.
Jan. 9-10: “The Godfather” (1972; Francis Ford Coppola), with Marlon Brando and Al Pacino; and “The Godfather, Part II” (1974; Francis Ford Coppola), with Al Pacino, Robert Duvall, Diane Keaton, and Robert De Niro.
Jan. 11-13: “Juliet of the Spirits” (1965; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina; and “Amarcord” (†).
Jan. 14-15: “Corrupt” (1984; Roberto Faenza), with Harvey Keitel and John Lydon; and “Return to Waterloo” (1985; Ray Davies).
Jan. 16-17: “Prizzi’s Honor” (1985; John Huston), with Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner, William Hickey, and Anjelica Huston; and “Wise Blood” (†).

Regency, B’way at 67th. (724-3700)
Jan. 7: “The 400 Blows” (1959; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and “Stolen Kisses” (1968; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Delphine Seyrig, and Claude Jade.
Jan. 8-10: “You’ll Never Get Rich” (1941; Sidney Lanfield), with Fred Astaire, Rita Hayworth, Robert Benchley, and John Hubbard; and “Broadway Melody of 1940” (Norman Taurog), with Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell, and George Murphy.
Jan. 11-12: “Sherlock Jr.” (1924; Buster Keaton; a silent film), “Seven Chances” (1925; Buster Keaton; a silent film), and “The Navigator” (1924; Buster Keaton and Donald Crisp; a silent film), all with Keaton.
Jan. 13-14: “The Long, Hot Summer” (1958; Martin Ritt), with Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Anthony Franciosa, and Orson Welles; and “Compulsion” (1959; Richard Fleischer), with Orson Welles, Diane Varsi, Dean Stockwell, and Bradford Dillman.
Jan. 15-17: “The Letter” (1940; William Wyler), with Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, James Stephenson, Frieda Inescort, and Gale Sondergaard; and “Now, Voyager” (1942; Irving Rapper), with Bette Davis, Paul Henreid, Claude Rains, and John Loder.

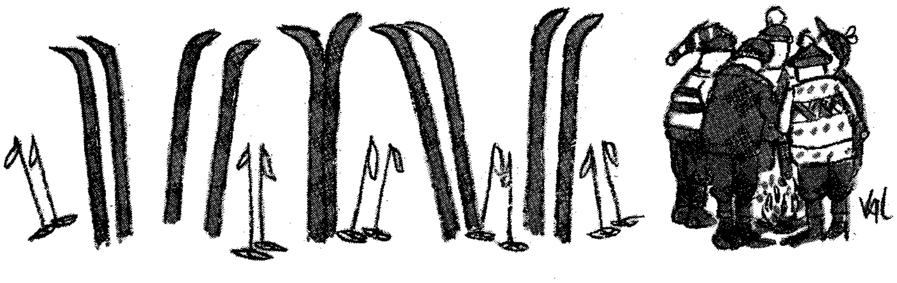
Thalia, B’way at 95th. (222-3370)
Jan 7: “The Return of Martin Guerre” (1983; Daniel Vigne; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Nathalie Baye; and “Mon Oncle d’Amérique” (1980; Alain Resnais; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Nicole Garcia, and Roger-Pierre.
Jan. 8: “Blow-Up” (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings; and “Zabriskie Point” (1970; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Mark Fre*chette, Daria Halprin, and Rod Taylor.*
Jan. 9-10: “Blade Runner” (1982; Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Brion James, Joanna Cassidy, and Daryl Hannah; and “The Road Warrior” (1982; George Miller), with Mel Gibson.
Jan. 11: “Yojimbo” (1961; Akira Kurosawa; *in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and* “Dersu Uzala” (1978; Akira Kurosawa; a Soviet-Japanese co-production, in Russian).
Jan. 12: “Repo Man” (†); and “Cutter’s Way” (“Cutter and Bone;” 1981; Ivan Passer), with Jeff Bridges, John Heard, and Lisa Eichhorn.
Jan. 13: “Under the Volcano” (1984; John Huston), with Albert Finney, Jacqueline Bisset, and Anthony Andrews; “Notes from Under the Volcano” (1984; Gary Conklin); and “Volcano” (1983), a documentary on Malcolm Lowry.
Jan. 14: “Insignificance” (1985; Nicolas Roeg), with Gary Busey and Tony Curtis; and “Performance” (1970; Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg), with Mick Jagger and James Fox.
Jan. 15: “Badlands” (1973; Terrence Malick), with Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek; and “Days of Heaven” (1978; Terrence Malick), with Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, and Robert Wilke.
Jan. 16-17: “Koyaanisqatsi” (1983; Godfrey Reggio); and “Metropolis” (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Jan. 7: “Five Easy Pieces” (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and “The Last Detail” (1974; Hal Ashby), with Jack Nicholson, Otis Young, and Randy Quaid.
Jan. 8: “Open City” (1945; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian); and “Bellissima” (1951; Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Anna Magnani and Walter Chiari.
Jan. 9-10: “Breathless” (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and “Made in U.S.A.” (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.
Jan. 11: “The Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe” (1973; Yves Robert; in French), with Pierre Richard; and “The Mad Adventures of ‘Rabbi’ Jacob” (1973; Gérard Oury; in French), with Louis de Funès.
Jan. 12: “Nosferatu” (†); and “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” (1919; Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover, and Friedrich Feher.
Jan. 13: “Double Indemnity” (†); and “The Big Carnival” (“Ace in the Hole;” 1951; Billy Wilder), with Kirk Douglas and Jan Sterling.
Jan. 14: “3 Women” (†) and “Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean” (†).
Jan. 15: “The General” (1926; Buster Keaton; a silent film), with Keaton; and “The Gold Rush” (†).
Jan. 16-17: “And the Ship Sails On” (†); and “I Vitelloni” (1953; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Alberto Sordi, Leopoldo Trieste, Franco Interlenghi, and Franco Fabrizi.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Jan. 7: “The Mystery of Edwin Drood” (1935; Stuart Walker), with Claude Rains, Valerie Hobson, Heather Angel, Douglass Montgomery, and David Manners; and “The List of Adrian Messenger” (1963; John Huston), with George C. Scott, Kirk Douglas, and Clive Brook.
Jan. 8: “Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon” (1943) and “The Woman in Green” (1945), two films in the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Holmes-Watson series, *both directed by Roy William Neill.*
Jan. 9-10: “Mr. Arkadin” (1955; Orson Welles), with Welles, Michael Redgrave, Patricia Medina, and Akim Tamiroff; and “The Stranger” (1946; Orson Welles), with Welles, Edward G. Robinson, and Loretta Young.
Jan. 11: “Charlie Chan at the Olympics” (1937; H. Bruce Humberstone), and “Charlie Chan at the Circus” (1936; Harry Lachman), both with Warner Oland as Chan.
Jan. 12: “Vampyr” (1932; Carl Dreyer; in German), with Julian West, Henriette Gérard, Rena Mandel, and Sybille Schmitz; *and “Day of Wrath” (†).*
Jan. 13: “The Night of the Hunter” (1955; Charles Laughton), with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, Lillian Gish, and James Gleason; and “Home from the Hill” (1960; Vincente Minnelli), with Robert Mitchum, Eleanor Parker, George Hamilton, and George Peppard.
Jan. 14: “Odd Man Out” (1946; Carol Reed), with James Mason, Robert Newton, and Kathleen Ryan; and “Outcast of the Islands” (†).
Jan. 15: “The Homecoming” (†); and “The Last Tycoon” (1976; Elia Kazan), with Robert De Niro, Tony Curtis, Robert Mitchum, Jeanne Moreau, Jack Nicholson, and Donald Pleasence.
Jan. 16-17: “Sunset Boulevard” (1950; Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim; and “All About Eve” (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)
Theatre 1: *Jan. 8 at 2:30 and 6:* “The Grapes of Wrath” (1940; directed by John Ford), with Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell. . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 2:30: “The Sleeping Tiger” (1954; Joseph Losey), with Dirk Bogarde, Alexis Smith, and Hugh Griffith. . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 6: “The Intimate Stranger” (“*Finger of Guilt;” 1956; Joseph Losey*), with Richard Basehart, Mary Murphy, Constance Cummings, and Roger Livesey. . . . ¶ Jan. 10 at 2: “Blind Date” (“Chance Meeting;” 1959; Joseph Losey), with Hardy Krüger, Stanley Baker, and Micheline Presle. . . . ¶ Jan. 10 at 5: “The Criminal” (“The Concrete Jungle;” 1960; Joseph Losey), with Stanley Baker, Sam Wanamaker, Margit Saad, and Jill Bennett. . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 2: “The Damned” (“These Are the Damned;” 1962; Joseph Losey), with MacDonald Carey, Shirley Ann Field, Viveca Lindfors, Alexander Knox, and Oliver Reed. . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 5: “Night of the Demon” (“Curse of the Demon;” 1957; Jacques Tourneur), with Dana Andrews, Peggy Cummins, and Niall MacGinnis. . . . ¶ Jan. 12 at 2:30: “Dracula” (“Horror of Dracula;” 1958; Terence Fisher), with Peter Cushing, Chris-



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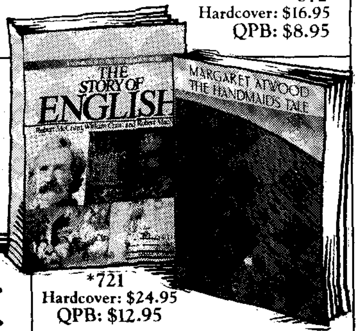
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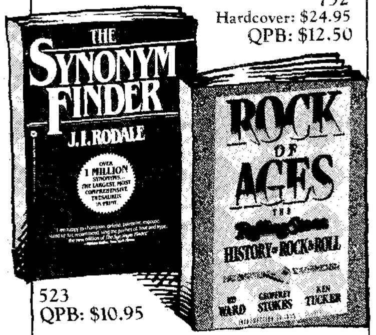
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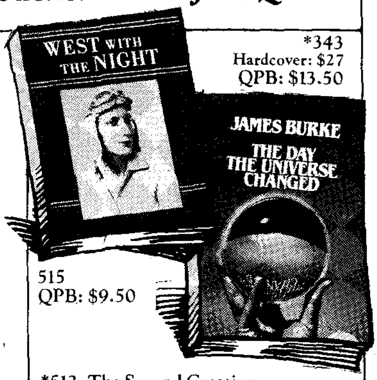
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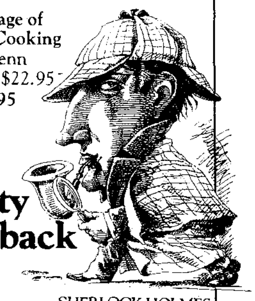

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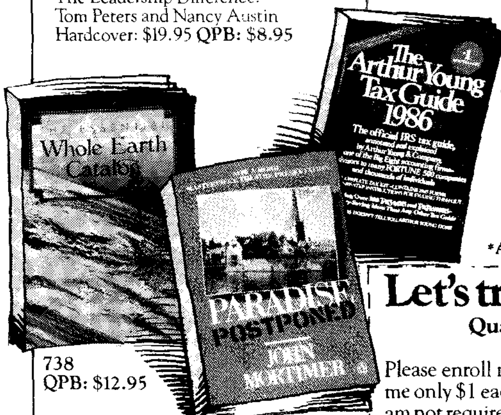
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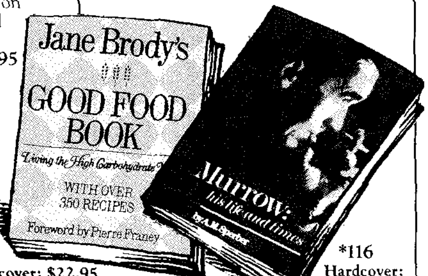
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topher Lee, and Michael Gough. . . . ¶ Jan. 12 at 6: "The Curse of Frankenstein" (1957; Terence Fisher), with Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, and Hazel Court. . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 2:30: "The Gorgon" (1964; Terence Fisher), with Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 6: "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1959; Terence Fisher), with Peter Cushing, André Morell, and Christopher Lee. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 2:30 and 6: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, and Everett Sloane. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2:30: "The Criminal." . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 6: "Blind Date." . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 2: "The Day the Earth Caught Fire" (1961; Val Guest), with Janet Munro, Leo McKern, and Edward Judd. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 5: "The Innocents" (1961; Jack Clayton), with Deborah Kerr, Michael Redgrave, and Peter Wyngarde.

THEATRE 2: Jan. 8 at 3 and 6:30: "Let Ye Inherit (In Memory of 425,000)" (1985; Imre Gyongyossy, Barna Kabay, and Katalin Petenyi), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 3: "Bob le Flambeur" (1955; Jean-Pierre Melville; in French with English subtitles), with Roger Duchesne and Isabelle Corey. . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 6:30: "Bay of Angels" (1963; Jacques Demy; in French, with English subtitles), with Jeanne Moreau, Claude Mann, and Paul Guers. . . . ¶ Jan. 10 at 2:30: "Pickpocket" (1959; Robert Bresson; in French, with English subtitles), with Martin La Salle and Marika Greene. . . . ¶ Jan. 10 at 5:30: "Bob le Flambeur." . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 2:30: "Bay of Angels." . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 5:30: "Anatomy of a Marriage: My Days with Jean-Marc" (1964; André Cayatte; in French, with English subtitles), with Marie-José Nat and Jacques Charrier. . . . ¶ Jan. 12 at 6:30: "Born to Film" (1983) and "Willy" (1985), two films by Danny Lyon, who will be present. . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 6:30: "The Fire Within" (1963; Louis Malle; in French, with English subtitles), with Maurice Ronet, Lina Skeria, and Jeanne Moreau. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 3 and 6:30: "The People United" (1985; Alonzo Speight), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 3: "Anatomy of a Marriage: My Days with Jean-Marc." . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 6:30: "The Truth" (1960; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French, with English subtitles), with Brigitte Bardot and Charles Vanel. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 2:30: "Adieu Philippine" (1960; Jacques Rozier; in French, with English subtitles), with Yveline Cery and Stefania Sabatini. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 5:30: "Cleo from 5 to 7" (1962; Agnès Varda; in French, with English subtitles), with Corinne Marchand and Antoine Bourseiller.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Through Jan. 16: "The Black Woman Independent: Representing Race and Gender," a program of twelve films and videos. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for film and time schedules. Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

ALL ABOUT EVE (1950)—Ersatz art of a very high grade, and one of the most enjoyable movies ever made. A young aspiring actress, Eve Harrington (Anne Baxter), intrigues to take the place of an aging star, Margo Channing (Bette Davis), onstage and in bed, and the battle is fought with tooth, claw, and a battery of epigrams. The bad taste, exhibited with verve, of the scriptwriter-director, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, is more fun than any careful, mousy, dehydrated good taste. Bette Davis, at her most instinctive and assured, makes the whole thing come alive (though it's hard to believe that Anne Baxter could ever be a threat to Bette Davis). With George Sanders, Celeste Holm, Gary Merrill, Thelma Ritter, Gregory Ratoff, Hugh Marlowe, Barbara Bates, Walter Hampden, and Marilyn Monroe. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 16-17.)

AMARCORD (1974)—Directed by Fellini, a reversion to the great days of his "8½," but even more beautiful and detailed. The film is set in small-town Italy at the beginning of Fascism, as seen through the eyes of a boy (Bruno Zanin), and it catches the sense of Italianate fun, the small-town self-importance that Fellini understands and loves. In Italian. (Cinema Village; Jan. 11-13.)

AND THE SHIP SAILS ON (1983)—The year is 1914, at the time of the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo. A luxury liner called the Gloria N. is sailing from Naples, carrying the ashes of a great operatic diva to the waters off the island of her birth, where they are to be dispersed at sea. Also on board are the late star's friends, colleagues, teachers, accompanists, relatives, fans, and lovers, all of whom have been summoned to take part in the ceremony. During the trip, the ship picks up several boatloads of Serbian refugees, whose presence on deck eventually causes the Gloria N. to be attacked and sunk by an Austro-Hungarian warship. The survivors escape in lifeboats, after which Fellini drops all pretense at any form of conventional storytelling and adopts the Pirandellian conceit of a play within a play, leaving his viewers at the end to wonder exactly what it is he wishes them to infer. But somehow, as always, Fellini's artistry transcends the obvious. In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 16-17.)

BLUE VELVET—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rossellini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/22/86.) (Waverly, and Criterion Center.)

THE COLOR OF MONEY—This Martin Scorsese film takes up Paul Newman as Fast Eddie Felson twenty-five years after the close of the 1961 Robert Rossen film "The Hustler," in which Eddie, the new poolroom champion, quit the game. Now he's a silver-haired Chicago liquor salesman, a likable cynical sharpie who himself stakes young hustlers (for sixty per cent of their winnings). When he sees the raw, cocky upstart Vincent (Tom Cruise), he makes a deal to train the kid. Newman brings off some beautiful smiling deviltry. The kick he gets out of acting is inseparable from Eddie's con artistry, and, with the help of pungent low-life dialogue by Richard Price, who wrote the script, he carries the action along. But about midway the joy goes out of Newman's performance, which (despite the efforts of a lot of good actors) is the only life in the movie. With Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Helen Shaver, Forest Whitaker, John Turturro, and Bill Cobbs. (11/3/86) (Eastside Cinema, and Embassy 1. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through Jan. 8, evenings only.)

COME BACK TO THE 5 & DIME JIMMY DEAN, JIMMY DEAN (1982)—It's doubtful if a major film director has ever before voluntarily taken on as thoroughgoing a piece of drivel as this one—a play set in a Texas small-town 5 & Dime and centering on the reunion of a James Dean fan club on the twentieth anniversary of his death. The movie version shouldn't work, but it does. When Robert Altman gives a project everything he's got, he can make poetry out of fake poetry and magic out of fake magic. The principal actresses—Sandy Dennis, Cher, and Karen Black—go at their roles so creatively that they find some kind of acting truth in what they're doing. Also with Marta Heflin, Sudie Bond, Kathy Bates, and, in the only male role, Mark Patton. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 14.)

CRIMES OF THE HEART—Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek playing sisters and sparking off each other are something to see. The play, by Beth Henley—a comedy about wacked-out normality, set in Hazlehurst, Mississippi—has its goofy charm; it's thin material, though, and her screen adaptation is just the usual "opening out." But the three actresses put so much faith in their roles that they carry the movie, triumphantly. They take the play's borderline pathos about heartbreakingly screwed-up lives—it's a mixture of looniness and lyricism—and give it real vitality. These are inspired performances. With Sam Shepard, Tess Harper, David Carpenter, and Hurd Hatfield. Directed (without much flair) by Bruce Beresford. (12/15/86) (34th St. East, Manhattan, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

DAY OF WRATH (1943)—It has been said that Carl Dreyer's art begins to unfold just at the point where most directors give up, and this psychological masterpiece, suggesting a fusion of Hawthorne and Kafka, is proof. In 1623, the young second wife of an austere pastor desires his death because of her love for his son; when she tells the pastor of her feelings, he suffers a stroke and dies. Accused of witchcraft, she becomes what she and her accusers believe a witch to be, and as she is trapped, and all possibility of hope is stripped away from her, the viewer's identification with her fear becomes unbearable; then Dreyer dissolves our terror as she is purified beyond even fear. The most intense, powerful film ever made on the subject of witchcraft, it explores the erotic tensions of the "witch" and her accusers. With Lisbeth Movin as the wife and Anna Svierkier. In Danish. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 12.)

THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE—The French-Canadian writer-director Denys Arcand takes on the subject of sex in a period of social change, without the binding ties of family and religion or strong commitment to the future—sex in a period when the eight principal characters (aging middle-class intellectuals connected with the History Department of a Montreal university) no longer believe in postponing pleasure. On this Friday afternoon in autumn, the women work out together at a gym in the city while the men, gathered at a lakeside cottage, prepare a festive dinner. Both groups talk about sex, and when they're together in the long evening they go on talking about sex, but more discreetly—with less bawdiness and bravura. Arcand isn't out to expose these people as spiritually empty; he's trying to present a truthful look at how they live. There's nothing weighty in his approach; it's a lovely, very unassuming picture, yet there is enough drama so that by the end a subtle shift in all the relationships is necessary. And the foreground action and the flashbacks that had been providing the background begin to merge. In French. (12/15/86) (Paris.)

DOUBLE INDEMNITY (1944)—Every turn and twist is exactly calculated and achieves its effect with the simplest of means; this shrewd, smoothly tawdry thriller is one of the high points of forties films. The director, Billy Wilder, collaborated with Raymond Chandler in adapting James M. Cain's story, and it's a tribute to them that one is likely to remember the names of the principal characters. Barbara Stanwyck's Phyllis Dietrichson is perhaps the best acted and the most fixating of all the slutty, cold-blooded femmes fatales of the *film noir* genre. With her bold stare, her sneering, over-lipsticked, thick-looking mouth, and her strategically displayed legs, she's a living entrapment device. Fred MacMurray's Walter Neff, an insurance salesman, is the patsy she ensnares in a plot to kill her businessman husband and collect on the double-indemnity clause in his policy. And as Keyes, the claims investigator for the insurance company, Edward G. Robinson handles his sympathetic role with an easy mastery that gives the film some realistic underpinnings. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 13.)

DOWN BY LAW—Jim Jarmusch's low-key minimalist comedy about American anomie, shot in black-and-white. The setting is New Orleans, where two deadbeats—Jack, an ineffectual pimp (John Lurie), and Zack, an itinerant disk jockey (Tom Waits)—become the victims of frameups and are put in the

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

same prison cell, where they vegetate in hostile silence. Everything changes when a little, life-loving Italian, Roberto (Roberto Benigni), is put in with them; the three become pals, grinning and talking together. And, eventually, Roberto devises an escape plan. Jarmusch's passive style has its wit, but the style is deadening here until he brings in Roberto—a character out of folk humor. With Ellen Barkin, Billie Neal, Nicoletta Braschi, Rockets Redglare, and Vernel Bagneris. (10/20/86) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad. Evenings only.)

The Gold Rush (1925)—He enters "pursued by a bear"—the man who for generations of filmgoers has been the embodiment of "the little fellow": humanity. In this extraordinarily sweet and graceful comedy, Chaplin is the weak and helpless perfect gentleman in the Klondike world of bears and brutes; yet his gallantry wins him the gold and the girl, too. In 1958, an international jury at Brussels selected this work as the second-greatest film of all time (after "Potemkin"). With Mack Swain as Big Jim, and with Georgia Hale, Tom Murray, and Henry Bergman. Produced, written, and directed by Chaplin. Silent; Chaplin later added music and a narration. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 15.)

Heartbreak Ridge—It's well known that many people have strong feelings about anal intercourse, but it's doubtful if a whole movie had ever been devoted to the expression of those feelings until this one. Clint Eastwood, who directed, plays (so to speak) a Medal of Honor winner from the Korean War and a decorated Vietnam vet—a Marine gunnery sergeant whose abhorrence of being put in a passive sexual position seems to be what makes him super-tough and manly. The marines in his platoon stand waiting while Old Gunny wraps his jowls around witless scurrilous insults, all involving what he's going to shove up their orifices. This should be the portrait of a pathetic vulgarian militarist with terrible anal-aggressive problems, but Eastwood presents him as a great fighting man, a relic of a time when men were men. And, in the last half hour, the film presents proof of what Gunny's training does for his platoon: it celebrates Grenada as a victory that evens the score, after a tie in Korea and a loss in Vietnam. This movie is offensive on just about every level. Written by James Carabatsos; with Marsha Mason, Mario Van Peebles, Everett McGill, Moses Gunn, Eileen Heckart, Bo Svenson, Boyd Gaines, and Arlen Dean Snyder. (12/29/86) (23rd St. West Triplex. . . . ¶ Manhattan, R.K.O. 86th St. Twin, and R.K.O. Warner Twin; through Jan. 8.)

The Homecoming (1973)—When this Harold Pinter play is presented on the stage, the tensions bounce around, and one can respond to the actors' relish in their roles, but on the screen the material is so lethally *set* that Pinter sounds Pinteresque. Michael Jayston, smiling a tiny, tight smile, plays the philosophy professor who, accompanied by his wife, Ruth (Vivien Merchant), returns from America to visit his Cockney family. The suggestiveness of the play remains, along with some of its charge, and so does Pinter's idiom, with its wit, though in the movie the language sounds crisped—overcalibrated. With Paul Rogers, Cyril Cusack, Ian Holm, and Terence Rigby. They are all playing so high they cancel out each other's performances. Directed by Peter Hall. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 15.)

The Leopard (1963)—It's magnificent—a sweeping popular epic, with obvious similarities to "Gone with the Wind," and with an almost Chekhovian sensibility. It has a hero on a grand scale—Don Fabrizio, Prince of Salina, played superlatively by Burt Lancaster, who modelled his performance on the nobleman director Luchino Visconti. The film is set in the eighteen-sixties, when Italy was in the middle of a revolution, but it's essentially about the Prince himself—the aging Leopard—and how he reacts to the social changes. With Alain Delon, Claudia Cardinale, Paolo Stoppa, and Rina Morelli. In Italian; three hours and five minutes. (Public Theatre; through Jan. 15.)

Little Shop of Horrors—With Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia; directed by Frank Oz. (Reviewed in this issue.) (New Gramercy, Beekman, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Men . . .—When the handsome, self-centered Julius (Heiner Lauterbach), a Munich advertising executive, discovers that his wife (Ulrike Kriener) has been having an affair with the oafish Stefan (Uwe Ochsenknecht), a long-haired bohemian, he wants to know what Stefan's attraction is, so he assumes a false name and moves in with him. Julius takes some kind of revenge by turning Stefan into an orderly bourgeois with a regular job; while that happens, whimsical gags are tossed together with a jocular feminist exposé of men's attitudes toward women. The picture is harmless and insipid, in the mode of French farces such as "Cousin, Cousine;" it sags in the middle and then collapses in an absurdist ending. Written and directed by Doris Dörrie. In German. (9/8/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Ménage—The first half hour of this sex farce is wonderfully brisk and slam-bang provocative: the writer-director Bertrand Blier violates old formulas and experiments with ideas of subversion and chaos. Gérard Depardieu is the burglar who, at night in a café, overhears the callous bitchy wife, Miou-Miou, bawling out her loving husband, Michel Blanc, because he can't make enough money to please her. Enamored of the mousy husband, Depardieu takes the two along on his surreally easy burglaries, waiting for his chance to bed the man. By the time that Miou-Miou has been sold to a pimp and the two men are in drag, working as prostitutes, Blier is trying so hard to be outrageous that he loses the beat; the outrageousness comes to seem another kind of bondage to formula. In French. (Cinema Studio.)

Metropolis (1926)—Fritz Lang's prophetic city of the twenty-first century (suggested by his first view of New York) has two levels: one for the rich and pleasure-loving, the other—labyrinthine, underground—for the slave workers who tend the machines. The industrialist tyrant who runs Metropolis plots to incite riots so that he can crush the workers' rebelliousness. His son has gone down to the workers and fallen in love with the saintly firebrand Maria (Brigitte Helm). The tyrant plots with an inventor, Rotwang, who, in a phenomenal science-fiction laboratory sequence, creates a steel double for Maria—the false Maria, who leads the masses to revolt. But the destruction gets out of hand and all of Metropolis would be destroyed were it not for the final alliance of the industrialist, his son, the true Maria, and the workers. One of the last examples of the imaginative—but often monstrous—grandeur of the Golden Period of German film, "Metropolis" is a wonderful, stupefying folly. With Alfred Abel, Gustav Frölich, Rudolf Klein-Rogge, Fritz Rasp, and Heinrich George. Note: The version showing now was reconstructed by Giorgio Moroder, with tinting that attempts to follow Lang's original specifications, and with a modern pop score. (Thalia; Jan. 16-17.)

Mona Lisa—Directed by the Irish novelist turned moviemaker Neil Jordan, the whole movie has some of the potency of cheap music that's represented by the title song (in Nat King Cole's 1950 recording). The short, chunky Bob Hoskins is tremendous as a one-time petty crook, just emerged from prison; given the job of chauffeuring a black call girl (Cathy Tyson) on her nightly rounds, he falls in love with her. She sets him to searching for a friend she's worried about—a blond fifteen-year-old heroin addict. As he makes his way through the strip joints and whores' hangouts, he's sickened by the way the girls are mistreated, and he sees that his old boss (Michael Caine) is in the rotten thick of it. Jordan shows a gift for making the emotional atmosphere visual, and vice versa. And the way he uses baroque touches and the clichés of old thrillers they become part of a fluid, enjoyable texture. With Robbie Coltrane, Clarke Peters, and Zoe Nathenson. Script by Jordan and David Leland. (6/16/86) (Film Forum.)

The Morning After—Jane Fonda gives a raucous-voiced, down-in-the-dirty performance that has some of the charge of her Bree in "Klute," back in 1971. As Alex, a former screen actress whose career blew up in scandal, she still has her face and her figure, but she has a hard, tortured look under her fluffy blond hair, and she drinks so much she has blackouts. (Fonda has said that she modelled the character on the starlet Gail Russell, who, at thirty-six, was found dead in

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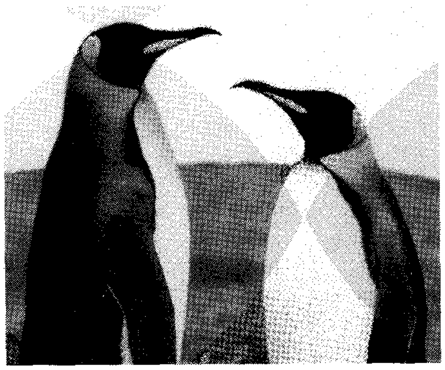

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her apartment, among empty liquor bottles.) In the opening scene, she wakes up in bed Thanksgiving morning with a man she can't remember even meeting; he has a knife sticking out of his heart. The director, Sidney Lumet, keeps things efficiently paced, but he coasts for too long on Fonda's work and on the polished bitchiness of the dialogue; he doesn't build the thriller elements that would give the film the kick it needs, and he fails to establish a couple of the important characters (played by Raul Julia and Diane Salinger, both miscast). The solid Jeff Bridges, who plays opposite Fonda, could be a good foil for her flare-ups, and if their relationship had been developed maybe they would be more vivid and resonate a little, and would survive what was happening around them. But all the forced, phony elements come together at the end and bring the picture down. The script is attributed to James Hicks (a pseudonym for James Cresson); others who worked on it include David Rayfiel and Jay Presson Allen. (12/29/86) (Bay Cinema, Gotham Cinema, 86th St. East, Waverly, Embassy 72nd St., and R.K.O. National Twin.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) The cast includes Shirley Anne Field, Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Nosferatu (1922)—Directed by F. W. Murnau, the original, superbly loathsome German version of Bram Stoker's novel "Dracula" is a concentrated essay in horror fantasy, full of weird, macabre camera effects. Though ludicrous at times, this first important film of the vampire genre has more spectral atmosphere, more ingenuity, and more imaginative ghoulish ghastliness than any of its successors. Henrik Galeen's adaptation of the novel changes the setting from Victorian England to Bremen in 1838. A real-estate agent in Bremen sends his young, recently married clerk to the Carpathian woods to settle some property matters at the castle of Nosferatu (the Vampire). An emaciated skeleton of a man with a rodent face, Nosferatu spends his days in his coffin, his nights sucking blood. The clerk, though weakened by the nightly loss of blood, escapes and returns to his wife. But Nosferatu follows and meets the wife, who, knowing that vampires cannot survive the dawn, surrenders herself to him. As the morning sun breaks into her bedroom, Nosferatu dissolves. With Max Schreck as Nosferatu. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 12.)

Outcast of the Islands (1952)—A marvellous film (drawn from Joseph Conrad's work) that relatively few people have seen. It's probably the only movie that has ever attempted to deal in a complex way with the subject of the civilized man's ambivalence about the savage. It also contains some of the most remarkable sequences ever filmed by the English director Carol Reed; it's an uneven movie, but with splendid moments throughout. Trevor Howard is superb as Willems, who makes himself an outcast first through contemptible irresponsibility and through betrayal of those who trust him, and finally and hopelessly when, against his will, he is attracted to the silent, primitive girl, the terrifying Aissa (played by Kerima). With Robert Morley, Wendy Hiller, and Ralph Richardson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 14.)

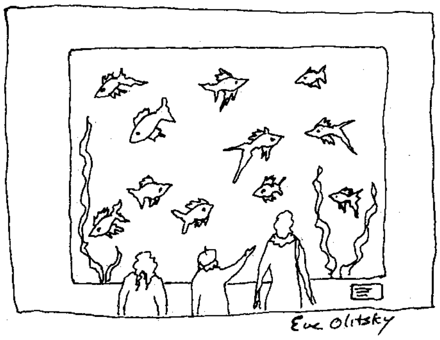
Peggy Sue Got Married—Distressed by her marital troubles, Peggy Sue (Kathleen Turner), the mother of two grownup children, collapses at the twenty-fifth reunion of her high-school class, and when she wakes up she discovers that she has gone back in time to the spring of 1960. Directed by Francis Coppola, this is a dream movie that asks whether Peggy Sue, knowing what she does at forty-three, should marry the same boy—passionate Charlie (Nicolas Cage), the only man she ever dated—knowing that he'll turn into the man who introduces himself on television as Crazy Charlie, the Appliance King. The underlying question is: Should Peggy Sue reconcile with her husband or go ahead and get a divorce? Coppola's efforts to bring depth to this material that has no depth make the picture seem groggy. It's as if he were trying to reach through a veil of fog. With Barbara Harris, Barry Miller, and Kevin J. O'Connor. (10/20/86) (Quad Cinema.)

Platoon—With Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, and Charlie Sheen; directed by Oliver Stone. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews New York Twin, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Repo Man (1984)—The L.A. of freeways and off ramps and squarish pastel-colored buildings that could be anything and could turn into something else overnight is the perfect setting for a movie about men who take out their frustrations by repossessing other people's cars. The young English writer-director Alex Cox keeps his dazed sociopaths speeding around—always on the periphery. There's nothing at the center. He has underhand ways of being funny, and the jokes don't often jump out at you—sometimes they barely peek out at all, because of the film's ramshackle ineptness. But the whole comic atmosphere of druggy burnout gets to you, and Cox never once slips—he never lets things get sentimentalized or organized. With Harry Dean Stanton, Emilio Estevez, Tracey Walter, Vonetta McGee, and Fox Harris. (Thalia; Jan. 12.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Round Midnight—Most of Bertrand Tavernier's mournful, blue-toned movie, which, an opening title tells us, was "inspired by incidents in the lives of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell," is set in Paris in 1959. The French jazz enthusiast Paudras is now called Francis Borier and is played by François Cluzet, and Powell, the great bebop pianist, who suffered frequent nervous breakdowns and then made a new life abroad, is now the dazed, alcoholic tenor-sax man Dale Turner, and is played by the near-legendary Dexter Gordon. The enthusiast is a saintly groupie. You know what kind of movie it's going to be when you see this guy out in a drenching rain, crouched against the building where the American is playing, because he doesn't have the money to go in. Cluzet is soaking wet, but his eyes shine and he listens to Dexter Gordon's music worshipfully. The French are pretty hard to take when they celebrate how much they love American art. You may come out with the feeling that Tavernier is proud of the gloomy dullness of the movie, that he sees virtue in it. With Sandra Reaves-Phillips, Lonette McKee, John Berry, Martin Scorsese, Philippe Noiret, and many well-known musicians. (D. W. Griffith, and Metro Cinema.)



She's Gotta Have It—The voluptuous, easygoing Nola (Tracy Camila Johns), a graphic designer who lives in the black bohemian world in Brooklyn, is happily juggling three lovers when she's faced by a mock crisis: each of the three men has turned possessive and wants to be her one and only. That's the premise of this quick-witted sex comedy written, directed, and edited by the twenty-nine-year-old Spike Lee, who shot it in 16-mm. in twelve days, on an almost nonexistent budget. Nola, her three lovers, and her family and friends explain themselves directly to the camera, and the film's basic set is Nola's bed; you can't shoot a movie much cheaper or faster than that. Lee's economies become part of what's enjoyable about the film, and he keeps it all bouncing along. With Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee himself. (10/6/86) (Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

3 Women (1977)—Robert Altman's dream film about three women whose identities merge, one into another, and flow together. Shelley Duvall plays a beautiful know-it-all girl who is an attendant in a health spa for the aged, Sissy Spacek plays the novice she breaks in, and Janice Rule plays a silent artist who paints lunging profile figures on the sides of swimming pools. The film is full of Altman's overheards and murmurs, with a hallucinating quality typified by his recurring use of self-absorbed twins who never speak except to each other. A fine, musing film. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 14.)

True Stories—This first feature directed by David Byrne, of Talking Heads, is laid out like a musical-comedy documentary about a town, except that the town—Virgil, Texas—is imaginary. Byrne, the narrator and observer, introduces us to the townspeople who are about to take part in the pageantry of the Texas Sesquicentennial with their own "Celebration of Specialness." Byrne is looking for a true mythic image of America; Virgil is Our Town, it's Anytown, U.S.A., and the movie is about banality and eccentricity and consumerism. Byrne sets up the material for satirical sequences, yet he doesn't give it a satirical spin. The picture's tone is often insecure, but, working with the crack cinematographer Ed Lachman, Byrne brings a new visual sensibility to the screen (a respect for pared-down plainness); and after a rather shaky opening the characters themselves begin to engage us. With John Goodman, Jo Harvey Allen, Tito Larriva, Roebuck (Pops) Staples, Swoosie Kurtz, Spalding Gray, Annie McEnroe, and Alix Elias. The script is by Byrne, Beth Henley, and Stephen Tobolowsky. (10/20/86) (8th St. Playhouse.)

Wise Blood (1980)—John Huston's faithful adherence to the text and flavor of Flannery O'Connor's first novel (it was published in 1952) has resulted in a scattered, disconcerting film that has not quite made up its mind whether it wants to be a movie or a literary reading. The picture works in the end, against all odds, because of its wild, strange humor and its sympathy for the rigors of home-fried Christian passion. Brad Dourif is painfully convincing as the black-hatted, Jesus-haunted prophet Hazel Motes, and Daniel Schor, Ned Beatty, Amy Wright, Harry Dean Stanton, and Mary Nell Santacroce are also funny and heartbreaking by turns as they pursue their lonely paths of scam and vision in the back alleys of our gothic South. (Cinema Village; Jan. 16-17.)

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POLO RALPH LAUREN

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

TIME was when just about the only way South Africans could learn about the detention of relatives and friends was through the South African press. Since the Botha government's latest crackdown, on December 12th, to publish any such names over there would constitute a criminal offense. We regret to have to report, on excellent authority, that subsequent to December 12th the following have, probably among many others, been detained: Jo Beall, Adonyha Dhthwathe, Lolo Ditshego, Asaph Huma, John James, Bill Jardine, Vusi Khanyile, Vishi Maharoja, Rhon Makgongwa, Mdlela Maphekhula, Jackie Masemola, Johanna Maskala, Vincent Mkhonza, Frans Mohlala, Khoromdi Motau, Thandi Mugadi, Logu Nathan Naidoo, Johnson Ndou, Mduduzi Ntshingila, Matthew Oliphant, Ronnie Peterson, Lizze Phike, John Radebe, Erin Setlema, Shameen Shaik, Zwelakhe Sisulu, Samuel Skosana, William Thomas, Molefe Tsele, and Lechesa Tsenoli.

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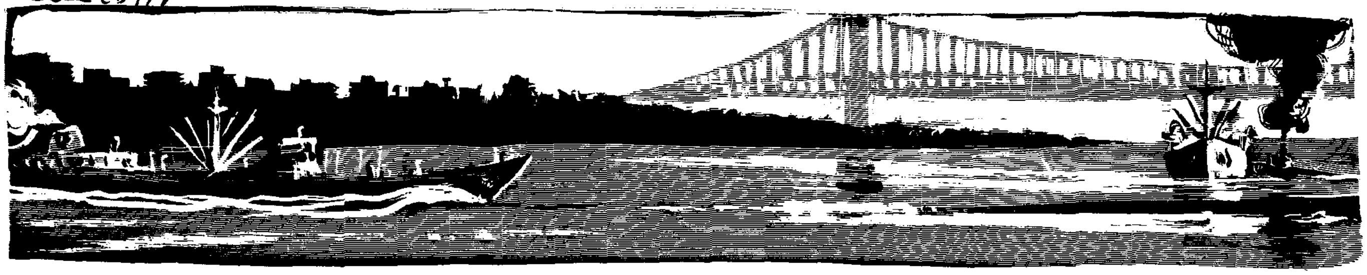
A READER writes:

What's all this lip-syncing? The nation's most adored TV show rarely purveys an episode without Bill or Phylicia or the kids mouthing air, rolling their eyes, and demonstrating labial stops while some pop classic from the bulging vaults unfurls on the soundtrack. Filmgoers still humming from Jessica Lange's spirited mime of the entire Patsy Cline discology in "Sweet Dreams" can now dig Dean Stockwell's eerily sensitive mock rendition of "In Dreams" in "Blue Velvet." From lurid go-go caves to sun-splashed kindergartens, lip-syncing seems to be the eighties mode of self-expression, just as the oil glut is the eighties economic fact and the trash glut the overriding civic problem. When you think about it, there exists both a glut of post-Beach Boys pop classics and a contemporary oversupply of selves needing expression, and lip-syncing must be Nature's way of mopping both up in one single, beautiful act of recycling. Lip-syncing wastes no wax and does not ask that society shoulder the housing costs of any new creativity. The other arts, also bedevilled by overpopulation and excess backlog, would do well to find equivalents of the lip-sync solution. How about:

BRUSH-SYNC. Acquire a large reproduction of an already accredited painting and without dipping your brushes in paint trace every stroke, right on the poster or giant Polaroid print. Where the brushstrokes are loaded, think gumbo. *Feel* gumbo. Where the texture thins, dip the dry brush frequently into a cup or dish devoid of turps. In the case of Action paintings, dribble-sync from the appropriate aerial distance, with facial expressions copied from sardonic photojournalism essays in fifties issues of *Life*. For the ultimate artistic adventure, sneak into a museum late at night and *brush-sync directly on actual masterpieces.*

TYPE-SYNC. Go through the motions of typing, or else firmly type on a keyboard welded solid, while periodically extracting photocopied pages of an admired manuscript from the platen. Lean energetically into erasures and manual insertions. Great piano-sync passages from old films such as "A Song to Remember," starring Cornel Wilde, may offer attitudinal guidance and indicate attainable levels of simulated emotion. A number of celebrated modern manuscripts are available in published form. That of "The Waste Land" offers an opportunity not only to sync Eliot tapping and scratching the various stanzas together but then to sync Pound making marginal comments and pencilling his brilliant, slashing deletions. The "Ulysses" manuscript is bulkier and more expensive, and tracing page after page of Joyce's Jesuit-trained handwriting may grow tedious, but there are some fun bits with colored crayon in the "Ithaca" episode.

THINK-SYNC. Sit prolongedly. At moments, abruptly leap up and pace the room, stare out a window, chew a pencil eraser, furrow the brow. Take deep, brain-oxygenating breaths;



wince when a chain of hypothetical thought is broken by an imagined interruption. Do not shy from extending for days, even weeks, this exercise in participatory appreciation and vicarious achievement. At the end, feign scribbling on a piece of paper, or silently mouth with a contorted expression of triumph “*Cogito, ergo sum*” or “$E=mc^2$” or “Absolute power corrupts absolutely” or “*Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m’effraie.*”

Syncing feels so good. Why be yourself, with that same old boring Social Security number, when you can sync your way out? History has had its fun; art is tired of trying not to repeat itself. The eternal return is cosmic-sync, and Nietzsche or a simulacrum may be next week’s guest on the Cosby show, doing “Also Sprach Zarathustra” with all the pauses and hiccups exquisitely in place.

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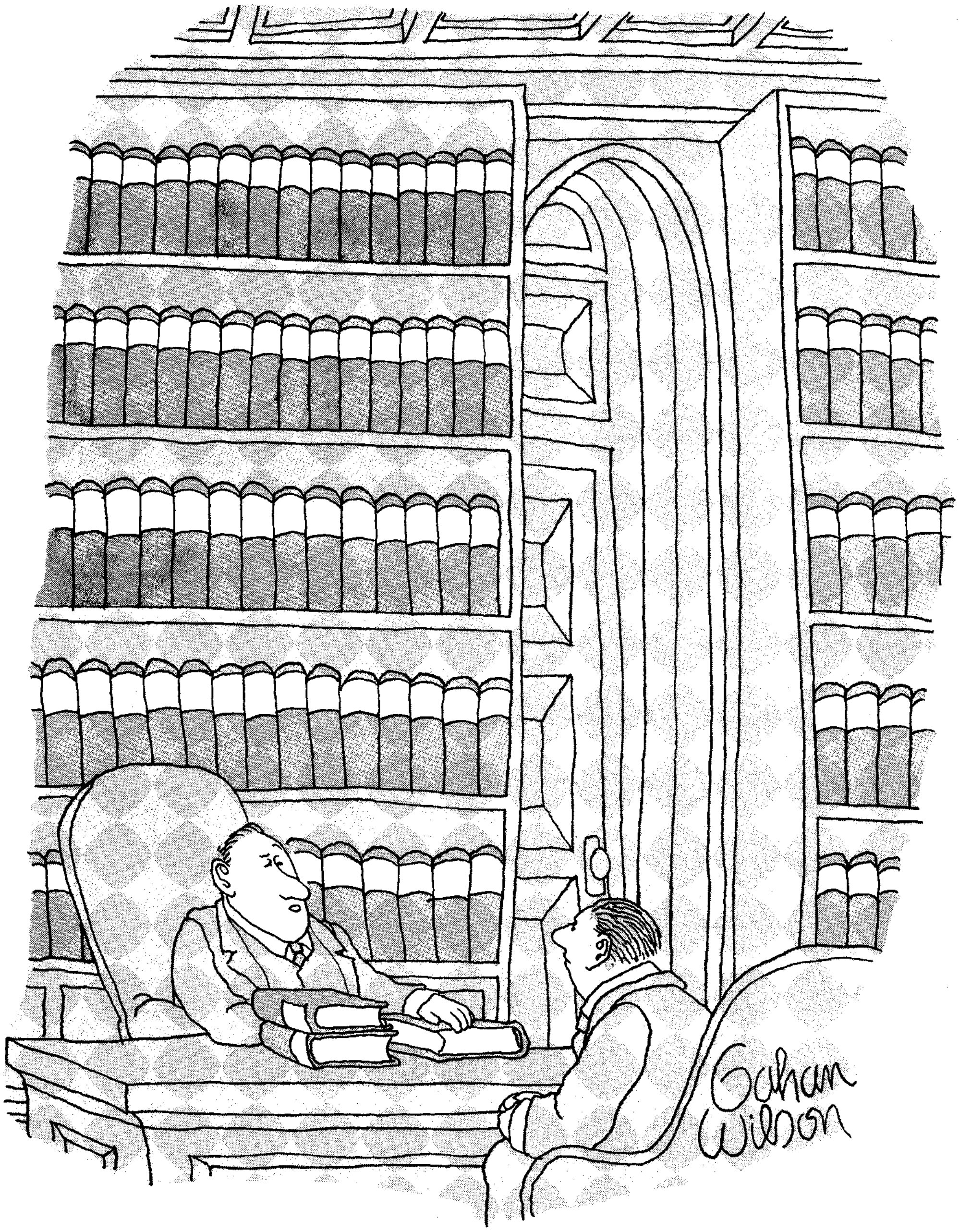
Of Our Time

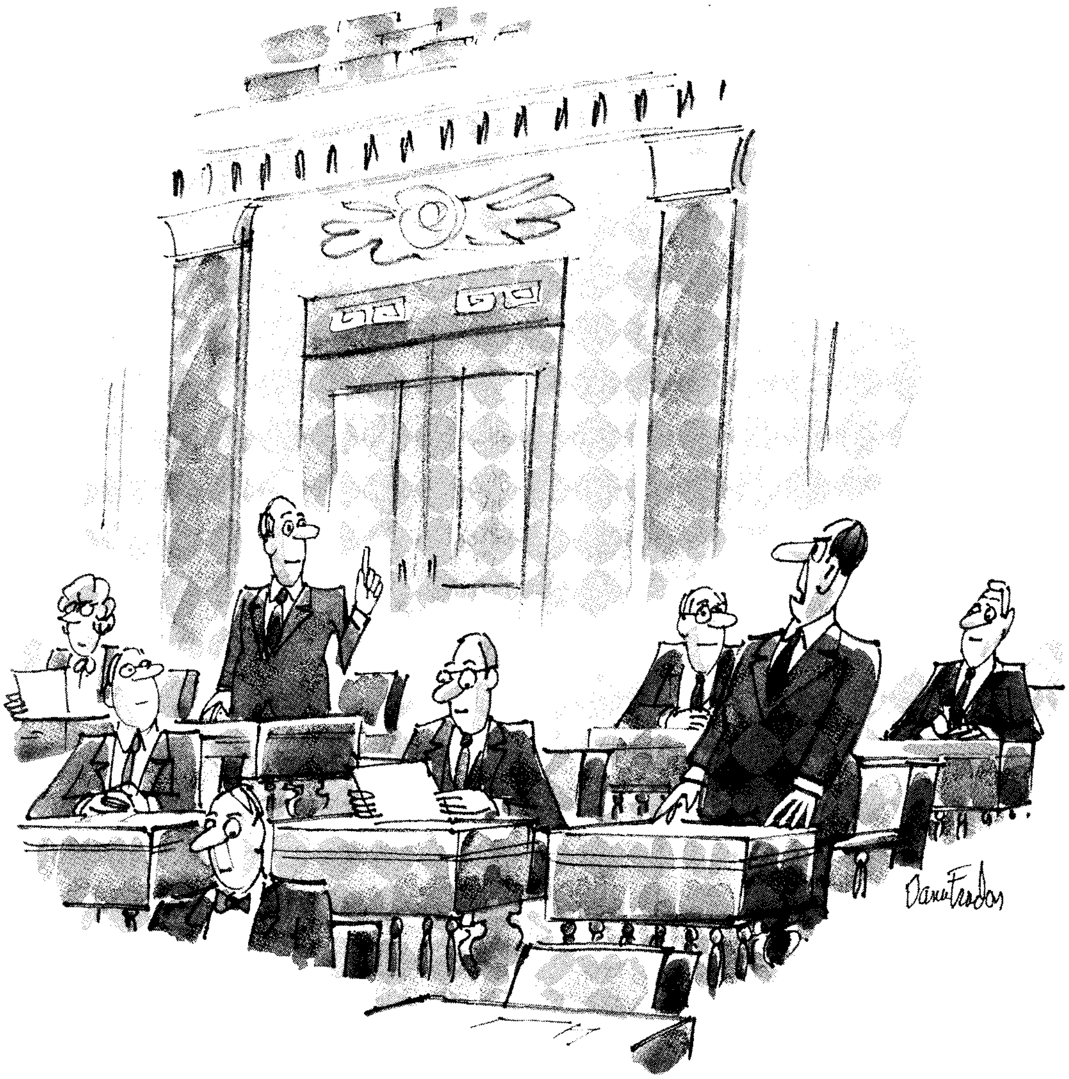
RICHARD J. THALHEIMER, the thirty-eight-year-old president and founder, a mere nine years ago, of The Sharper Image, which is a hundred-and-thirty-million-dollar-a-year (as of the latest count) catalogue-cum-twenty-five-coast-to-coast-shops (as of the latest count) enterprise, specializes in selling items that he proudly characterizes as objects he lives with and loves. (“I call them an eclectic mix of unusual quality products.”) From his headquarters, in downtown San Francisco, Mr. Thalheimer, who speaks with certainty of himself as “a man of our time,” mails each month to people all over the world three million copies of his catalogue, at a cost of a million four hundred thousand dollars for each mailing, and he has determined through highly respected, highly contemporary polls that he nails at least a hundred and three readers for each copy sent out. He has also determined that the average Sharper Image customer is a forty-four-year-old male with an annual income of a hundred thousand dollars. The catalogue presents the items in visually oriented, practically jumping layouts, including some descriptive words created by three full-time writers. (“I personally edit every piece.”) It has covers that are the ultimate in up-to-the-minute imagery, fixed firmly on the fast track. Two covers in 1986 alone featured Marilyn Monroe, and the last issue of the year featured an M.M. look-alike—in tight spangled red dress and red shoes, and holding a red leash tethering a white poodle that sported a red hair bow—being ogled by Marx Brothers look-alikes standing over the words “Beverly Hills Store Now Open.” Every month, Mr. Thalheimer says, his catalogue demonstrates what an entrepreneur can achieve. (“We’re bringing up a generation of people who think of us as L. L. Bean. We know that thirteen-to-fifteen-year-olds are fans and readers of the catalogue. Once you win their hearts, you have them for life.”)



“Well, there was a Malone who tried that in 1942 and won, but, on the other hand, there was a Parker who tried it in ’63 and lost.”

In person, Mr. Thalheimer is the very model of a modern major entrepreneur: tanned and muscular; deliberate and tenacious; tidy and clean; eye on the ball; a graduate of Yale, Class of 1970 (“I was a psychology major, because you can do anything if you know what makes people tick”); a graduate of the Hastings College of the Law, in San Francisco (“I was going out to build a big business, and I wanted to learn how to protect myself”); a money-maker as a college freshman (“I was the only Yalie to show up at the Encyclopædia Britannica office for a job as a salesman of it and the Great Books, and I was an immediate success. I made enough in my freshman year to buy a Porsche”); a native of Little Rock, Arkansas, who went to San Francisco after graduating from Yale and started a paper-

and-office-supply business, run out of his apartment, that made a profit of twenty thousand dollars a year and paid his way through law school ("By now, I was accustomed to being a success"); with a wife, Elyse, who is a full-time partner in the business; and with a quickness to act, in 1977, on an ad he spotted in the magazine *Runner's World* for a jogging watch which did not say where it might be bought—he called the manufacturer of the watch, arranged to sell it, and made a profit, in his company's first year, of three hundred thousand dollars on that item alone. After that, Mr. Thalheimer welcomed his parents, who still live in Little Rock, into the business, his father as vice-president of the gemstone division and his mother as a designer of gem settings. Mr. Thalheimer also started going to electronics shows, sporting-goods shows, toy fairs, and fitness exhibits, and made trips all over the world to look for more items.

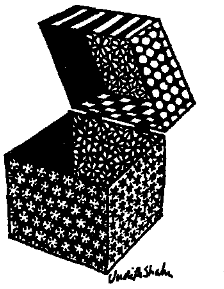


"Listen, pal! I didn't spend seven million bucks to get here so I could yield the floor to you."

In the past few years, Mr. Thalheimer has developed hobbies ("I developed my hobbies in order to test my items"): running, bicycling, scuba-diving, cross-country skiing, photography, motorcycling, and flying. He is the co-pilot of his company plane, a Citation jet, which he uses to visit his stores, hopping from San Francisco to Dallas and on to Houston and New Orleans and back. ("I relax by flying my own personal plane, a V-Tail Bonanza.") He designs his own suits. He uses everything he sells. ("I choose things because I like the way they look. The ones I like the best sometimes become 'exclusively ours.' Like the giant wave machine. Exclusively ours. Three hundred and ninety-nine dollars. I am guided by my own entrepreneurial philosophy, which is: I sell what I like. I sell as though I were selling to myself.")

Mr. Thalheimer lives in a rambling modern house in Marin County, overlooking San Francisco Bay. He wakes up, at 6:30 A.M., to a voice-deactivated alarm clock ($39). He sleeps in a Sharper Image T-shirt (color, burgundy, and it also comes in gray; shirts in either color free with purchases of $50 or more), covered by an electric blanket that knows how to warm different parts of the body at different temperatures ($139), and on a Neck Pillow ($49). He gets up and turns off his Sound Soother, the Surf ($129). He brushes his teeth with an Interplak ($99), which is an electric toothbrush. ("An incredible product. It doesn't vibrate; it rotates. It's a fun toothbrush.") Before starting out of the house for a run, he hits the panel of his Toshiba coffee grinder and maker and puts on his Seiko pulse watch. He goes out with his dogs, two giant schnauzers, who are wearing electronic flea collars ($49 each), returns and puts on his Turkish robe bearing the monogram RJT ($75), sits for a while in his Getaway massage chair ($1,595), checks his weight—a hundred and seventy-four pounds—on his talking scale ($99), drinks a cup of coffee, turns on his combination fan and heater called the Bionaire Gyro Twin Aire ($129), checks his pants in the Corby Classic Pants Press ($159), works out on the compact home gym ($189), checks his blood pressure on the automatic monitor ($99), notices some dust on his windowsills and cleans it up with a Panasonic Cordless Vacuum ($69), and then gets dressed, choosing to put on one of several watches: the Moonphase ($99), the calculator-phone-directory watch ($59), or the dress watch Invicta ($199). He picks up his executive micro recorder ($199). He can't locate his car keys, so he claps his hands four times and they chirp at him by means of the Key Finder ($19). He gets into his car, a Mercedes 500 sedan. It has a Clifford car alarm. ("That's seven hundred dollars, but I sell the Theft

Stop, for nineteen dollars and fifty cents—it serves practically the same purpose—and I have the house version on the house. Isn't that great?") He turns on his heated car seat ($99) and drives to work, using a car phone. Within reach is his GUL radar detector ($169). In his office he has a pair of Samurai swords ($199), a 1,500-carat topaz paperweight ($1,000), a Nautilus Abdominal Machine ($485), a Marilyn Monroe lithograph ($399), a cobalt lamp ($199), a touch desk lamp ($89), a wastebasket with a paper shredder attached ($149), a globe of the world ($179) from Denmark ("Exclusively ours. It shows Israel. I also sell one, made for the Middle East, that doesn't show Israel"), some model Ferrari cars ($69 each), a special putter ($79), a Porta Copy ($349), and an Alpha phone with speaker and two-hundred-number memory ($149). At 6 P.M., he leaves for home. He often stops off at a small airport thirty miles north of the city and goes flying in his Bonanza, wearing his orange-colored Rēvo aviator glasses ($149). Entering his house, he hits the button of his Sony Integrated Answering System ($239). He turns on his Proton FM/AM clock radio ("*only ninety-nine dollars*"). He lifts weights in his Universal Gym ($3,500) and spends about forty-five minutes after that on the cross-country-skiing Fitness Master ($399). He goes for a swim in the bay wearing Barracuda goggles ($39), returns, and puts on the remote-controlled stereo ($795), which plays compact disks. ("I like Mozart.") For a while, he watches the pelicans and gulls on the bay through Bushnell binoculars ($99), checks the time on the captain's clock of solid brass ($99), hears the quack-quack (instead of ring-ring) of his duck phone ("I have the first generation, in plastic. The present generation is better—it's wood, and eighty-nine dollars. But both have the same quacks"), lights a fire in his fireplace with a Flexi-Lite ($29), and hooks up a Multi Vision to his television screen to permit him to see what is going on on two channels ($499). While watching the news, he likes to hold and play his hand-held computer backgammon game ($69). He relaxes on one of three massage tables, usually choosing the Acu, which massages without a masseur ($1,595). He finishes himself off with a hand-held massager. ("Only a hundred and fifty-nine dollars. It generates tiny pulses of sound, desensitizing pain spots. It's a great concept. It really works.") Mr. Thalheimer and his wife eat light, healthful meals. They cut up their vegetables with knives sharpened on their electric Chef'sChoice ($79). Before retiring, Mr. Thalheimer uses his vacuum to make sure there is no dust. He often uses his Luma telephone to call his parents, to whom he gave one, so that he and they see each other (in a still, snapshot image) on screens while they are talking ($1,450). He keeps a slide viewer ($149) on hand in order to see product ideas submitted to him. ("I may look at something like Uncle Peppe's Clam Opener, which was not us, somehow.")



The other day, Mr. Thalheimer, wearing a Thalheimer-designed suit—a custom-made gray tweed with a belted sports back and a black Ultrasuede collar and matching black piping on three pockets—and his Moonphase watch and carrying what he identified as "the newest generation of miniature Casio musical keyboard," made a quick trip to New York, scouted some possible midtown sites for a new shop, and then looked in on his Sharper Image store on Pier 17, at the South Street Seaport. It was packed with well-dressed, mesmerized-looking shoppers, studying the gadgets in a leisurely way. ("We get tons of Wall Streeters here. Our stores take advantage of our good will.") The items were arranged, under glass or on glass shelves, with nice breathing space between item and item. The store manager, a robust middle-aged gentleman wearing a dark-blue suit, greeted Mr. Thalheimer with a smile, and Mr. Thalheimer quickly handed him the newest generation of keyboard. Mr. Thalheimer then checked on things. He sat in the Getaway chair and had his back massaged with rollers while listening to the chair's cassette player. He tried out the Luma phone and studied his own picture on the small screen. He picked up a cue stick for the miniature ("exclusively ours") pool table ($139) and played a shot. The store manager applauded, and told Mr. Thalheimer that a Sharper Image Wurlitzer jukebox, handmade in California, complete with the top records on the current charts ($8,400), had been sold that morning to a woman in Bayside, Queens. Mr. Thalheimer nodded, and gave a pat to a sculpture that changes at a touch ($1,295). Then he passed his fingertips over the top of it.

"Dust," Mr. Thalheimer said. "Dust makes me very unhappy."

"Dust collects fast in the store," the manager said.

"I know," Mr. Thalheimer said sympathetically. He passed the palm of his hand over the dusty top, cleaning it the old-fashioned way.

What They Were Saying One Morning Last Week (7:45-8:30)

"I FINISHED doing my hair at six-forty-seven. I started doing my hair at six-eleven."[1]

"I gave him a dirty look."[2]

"I gave him a dirty look, too, but he just walked away."[3]

"I said, 'The other guy knows everything. What do you need *me* for?'"[4]

"He was a very impatient person, and when he set a meeting for eleven o'clock he expected you at eleven o'clock."[5]

"What you do is, you take a deep breath and . . . "[6]

"I don't know. They *were* here."[7]

"How could that guy have . . . "[8]

"Huh?"[9]

"You know Judge O'Brien?"[10]

"I just want 'em to stay off my back is all."[11]

"He's got a bayda." "A bayda?" "A bayda, a bayda." "A beta?" "A Betamax—that's his problem."[12]

"Ka-*choo!*"[13]

[1] Schoolgirl on M7 bus. [2] A second schoolgirl. [3] First schoolgirl. [4] Man with coffee container leaning on mailbox on Madison Avenue to man with coffee container leaning against street light. [5] Red-haired woman in suit and white sneakers to man in suit. [6] Customer to proprietor of newsstand on Forty-second Street. [7] Woman to man, both looking anxiously at buildings on Fifth Avenue. [8] Elderly woman to second elderly woman, coming out of subway on Sixth Avenue. [9] Window-washer in reply to remark by second window-washer, on sidewalk at Forty-fourth and Madison. [10] One of two men in suits carrying leather satchels bulging with papers. [11] Man to second man, hurrying uptown on Sixth Avenue. [12] Three men in the plaza between Forty-fifth and Forty-sixth Streets east of Sixth, one of them with a broom. [13] A woman in a raincoat entering an office building.

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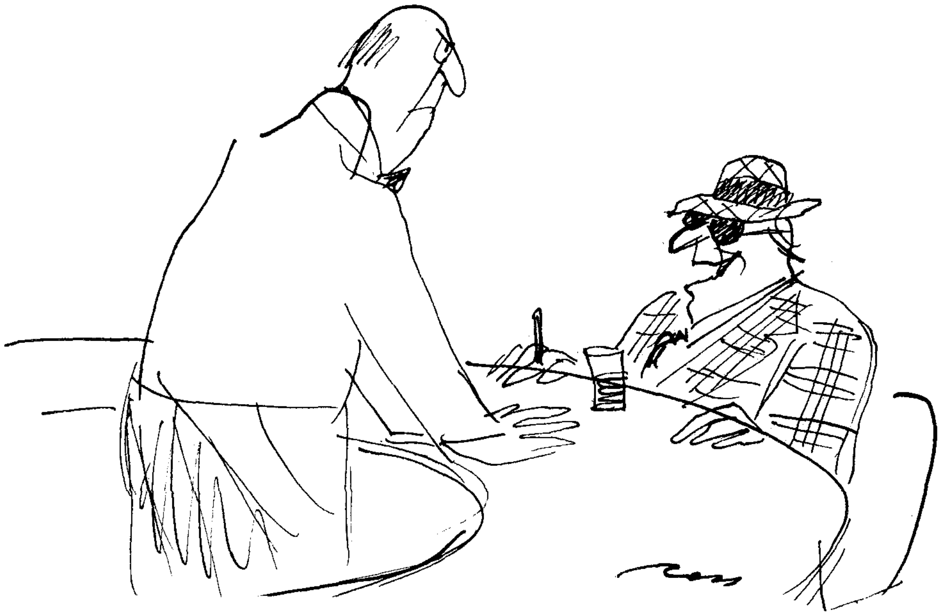
COMMUNICATION received by a friend from her empathetic neighborhood savings bank: "Please fill out the enclosed W-9 form by printing your name and address. Also fill in your correct SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER and then sigh, and return.”



“Mind you, my particular kind of wit doesn’t appeal to everybody.”

Fish Trip

THE Corlears School is an institution on West Fifteenth Street, in Chelsea, that stands forthrightly in the Francis Bacon–Fred Rogers think-do-feel tradition. Tuition runs about what you might expect, but you get your money’s worth. The other day, for instance, a bunch of kids from Corlears took a trip to a fish store.

Bianca Posner, the head teacher of what is called the fives-sixes class (even though Zachary, Peter, and one of the Ryans in the group have by now turned seven), posts a preview of each day’s highlights on a large sketch pad that rests on an easel. Those children who know how to read tend to recite the morning message aloud in a ceremonious way. The other members of the class try to bluff their way through it. “Good morning,” that day’s message began. “Today is our trip to the fish store. We will buy some fish. We will interview the store owner.” The fives-sixes had devoted much thought to what they wanted to ask the fish-store owner, and Bianca (no one calls her Ms. Posner; the Corlears community is philosophically committed to a first-name basis) had written their questions on small index cards. Ryan A. planned to ask “Do you have any red fish?” and “Do you go on a fishing boat?” Ryan Q. had several questions, including “What state do the fish come from?” and “What do the fish eat?” Elizabeth wanted to know “Do you use a spear gun?” Omar’s question was “Do you sell sardines?” Beechie’s was “Why do fish eyes feel like jelly?” Jane: “Who shops here?” Caitlin: “Do you have any live fish?” Kate: “How do you kill the fish?” Jesse: “Do you sell dead killer whales?” And so forth.

About an hour of the school day had passed, and it was now time to go to the fish store. Bianca, who has gray hair and a warm, thoroughly credible smile, dispensed the index cards, along with some last-minute thoughts: “Jesse, here’s your question. Ryan Q., please come get your questions. Elizabeth, would you like to go to your cubby and get your coat? Richoux, you need to put your coat on and sit down in your meeting spot with a book. Jeb, please sit up. Zachary, please sit down.”

In time, everyone lined up. Everyone held a partner’s hand. Everyone started to move forward. Everyone halted when Bianca announced a shoelace emergency involving Peter’s left foot. The emergency spread to Peter’s right foot. At last, everyone made it down two flights of stairs and out the door. Poised at the corner of Fifteenth Street and Eighth Avenue, everyone tried to concentrate on obeying the street-crossing rule: There is *no talking* while crossing the street. However, this rule is virtually unobeyable.

At the northwest corner of Seventeenth Street and Eighth Avenue, Bianca said, “If you look straight ahead, do you see a sign that says ‘Fish Market’? That’s where we’re going.” She meant De Martino’s Fish Market.

Outside the entrance, Bianca said, “We will see some people who are working here. We will stay with partners. See how many things you can see, and look for clues about the kind of work that people do. And then we’ll see what questions we have to ask.”

Inside De Martino’s, all the fish were dead—all except the shellfish and the eels. Everything else—dead, dead, dead. All the fish eyeballs—you could poke them with a pencil and see that they were just like jelly. The octopuses—just like dead octopuses. The shark mounted on the wall above the crab barrel had never been alive—not even for a minute. Beechie picked right up on that. (“That’s a plastic hammerhead shark. I just know. I’ve had a lot of experience with fish.”) Mike Castagliola, the owner, was filleting a sea trout. It’s called a sea trout because it lives in the sea. Mike turned out to be a nice man but not a very active fisherman; he wakes up at two-thirty every morning and goes to the Fulton Fish Market.

Mike said, “Our motto is ‘If it swims, we have it.’ ”

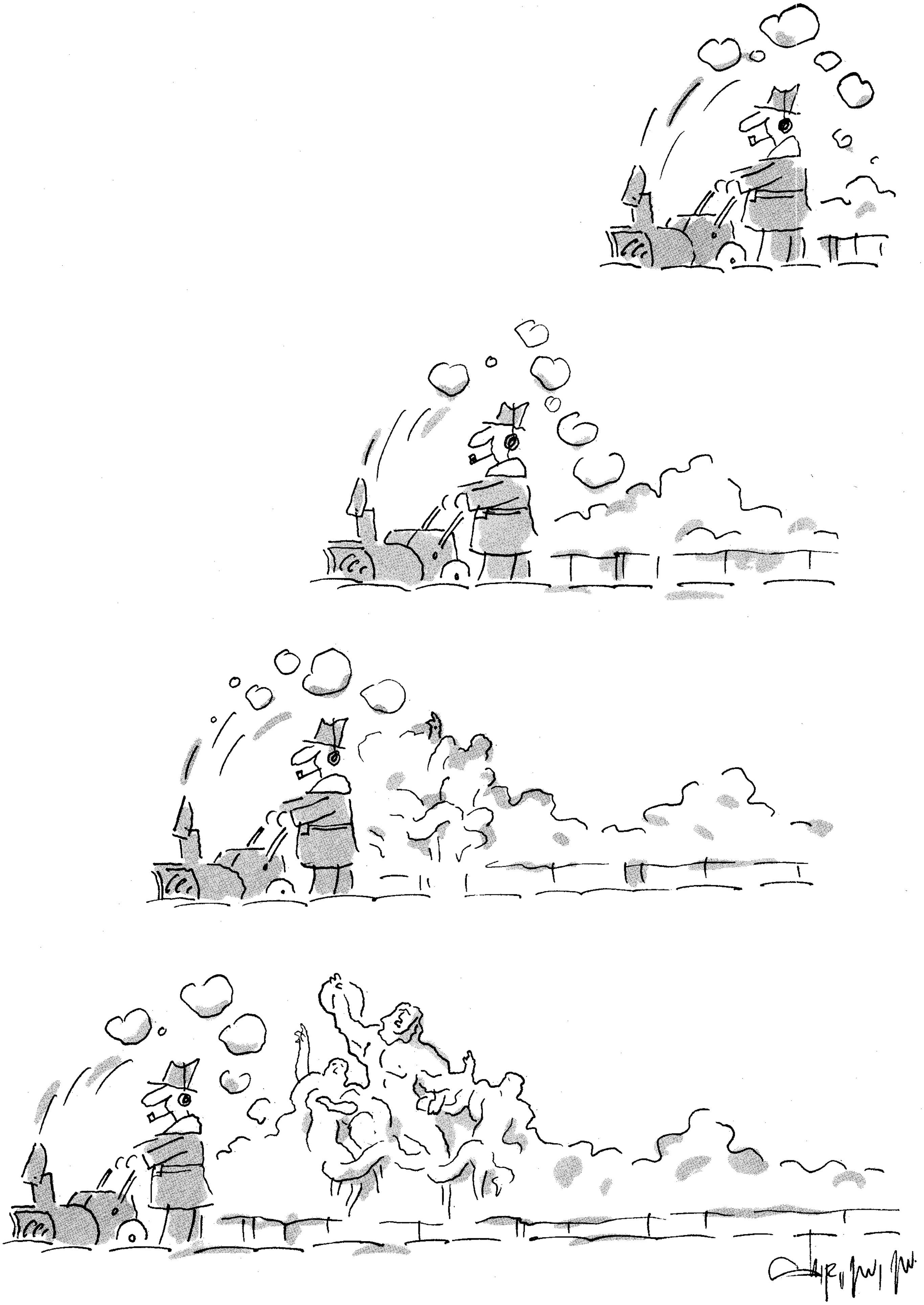
Jesse asked Mike whether he had any dead killer whales for sale.

When Mike admitted that he didn’t, Jesse didn’t seem surprised.

Several boys—Ben, Jeb, Joey, David—conducted an experiment that involved picking up live crabs with tongs and dropping them. This proved that crabs understand gravity.

The fives-sixes wanted to buy two bluefish, one butterfish, one flounder, and one fish head, which they planned to take back to Corlears in order to conduct some more experiments, but first Mike had to help another customer, a slender man with a dark beard. This customer had not prepared his questions in advance. He knew that he wanted a fish, but he could not name the kind of fish he wanted. He needed a fish because he was a free-lance photographer who had been told to photograph a fish for a magazine article about cholesterol. Other foods that he planned to photograph: some bread, a bran muffin, some milk. “We’re going to spray the fish white,” he said. “I need about a ten-inch fish. A photogenic fish. One that will spray well and won’t decompose under the lights. I’m not a food stylist as such. I’m more of a generalist.”

No one wanted to ask the photographer any questions. Mike Castagliola sold him a mackerel.



ON THE DECK

THERE is a lion on the deck of the boat. The lion looks tired, fatigued. Waves the color of graphite. A grid placed before the lion, quartering him, each quarter subdivided into sixteen squares, total of sixty-four squares through which lion parts may be seen. The lion a dirty yellow-brown against the gray waves.

Next to but not touching the lion, members of a Christian motorcycle gang (the gang is called Banditos for Jesus and has nineteen members but only three are on the deck of the boat) wearing their colors which differ from the colors of other gangs in that the badges, insignia, and so on have Christian messages: "Jesus is Lord" and the like. The bikers are thick-shouldered, gold earrings, chains, beards, red bandannas, a sweetness expressed in the tilt of their bodies toward the little girl wearing shiny steel leg braces who stands among them and smiles—they have chosen her as their "old lady" and are collecting money for her education.

To the right of the Christian bikers and a bit closer to the coils of razor wire forward of the lion is a parked Camry (in profile) covered with a tarp and tied down with bright new rope, blocks under the wheels, the lower half of its price sticker visible on the window not completely covered by canvas. The engine is running, exhaust from the twin tailpipes touching the thirty-five burlap-wrapped bales stacked at the back of the car. There is someone inside the car, behind the wheel. This person is named Mitch. The exhaust from the car irritates the lion, whose head rolls from side to side, yellow teeth bared.

In front of the tied-down red Camry, a man with a nosebleed holding a steel basin under his chin. The basin is full of brown blood, brown-stained blooms of gauze. He holds the basin with one hand and clutches his nose with the other. His blue-and-red striped shirt is bloody. "Hello," he says. "Hello, hello!" Gray institutional pants and brown shoes. There's a tree, an eight-foot Western fir, in a heavy terra-cotta pot between his legs. He appears to be trying to avoid bleeding on the tree. "They don't have anything I want," he says. A basketball wedged between the upper branches on the left side. Immediately to the left and forward of the fir tree, a yellow fifty-five-gallon drum labelled in black letters "Prismatex," a hose coiled on top of it; bending over the Prismatex, her back turned, a young woman with black hair in a scant, thin yellow dress. Concentrate on the hams.

The tilting of the deck increases; spray. The captain, a red-faced man in a blue blazer, sits in an armchair before the young woman, a can of beer in his right hand. He says, "I would have done better work if I'd had some kind of encouragement. I've met a lot of people in my life. I let my feelings carry me along." At the captain's knee is the captain's dog, a black-and-white Scottie. The dog is afraid of the lion, keeps looking back over his shoulder at the lion. The captain kisses the hem of the young woman's yellow dress. There's a rolled Oriental rug bound with twine in front of the Scottie, and in front of that a child's high chair with a peacock sitting in it, next to that a Harley leaning on its kickstand (Honk If You Love Jesus in script on the gas tank). The owner of the boat, sister of the woman in the yellow dress, is squatting by the Harley cooking hot dogs on a hibachi, a plastic bag of buns by her right foot. A boyfriend lies next to her, playing with the bottom edge of her yellow shorts. "Sometimes she's prim," he says. "Don't know when you wake up in the morning what you're going to get. I'm really not interested just now. At some point you get into it pretty far, then it becomes frightening."

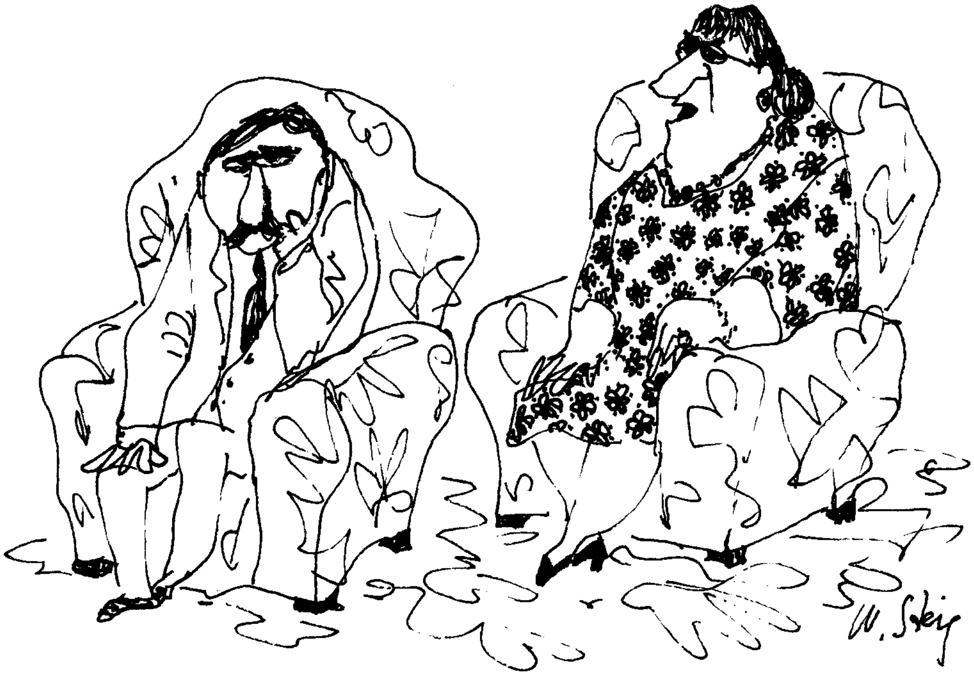
"A smooth flight isn't totally dependent on the pilot," says the next man. There's a bucket of raw liver between his knees, liver for the lion, he's up to his elbows in liver. Next, a shuffleboard court and two men shoving the bright-colored disks this way and that with old battered M1 rifles. "I put two forty-pound sacks of cat food in the bed and covered them neatly with a blanket but she still didn't get the message," one of them says. Farther along, a marble bust of Hadrian on a bamboo plant stand, Hadrian's marble curls curling to meet Hadrian's marble beard, next to that someone delivering the mail: a little canvas pushcart containing mail pushed in front of her, blue uniform, two shades of blue, red hair. "Everyone likes mail, except those who are afraid of it," she says. Everyone gets mail. The captain gets mail, the Christian bikers get mail, Liverman gets mail, the woman in the scandal-dress gets mail. Many copies of *Smithsonian*. A man sitting in a red wicker chair.

Winter on deck. All of the above covered with snow. Christmas music.

Then, spring. A weak sun, then a stronger sun.

You came and fell upon me, I was sitting in the wicker chair. The wicker exclaimed as your weight fell upon me. You were light, I thought, and I thought how good it was of you to do this. We'd never touched before.

—Donald Barthelme



"Why are you the way you are?"

SUGAR

MY mother had a respect for truth, but she was not a truthful woman. She once said to me, her lip trembling, and her eyes sharp to detect my opinion, "Your father *says* I am a terrible liar. But I'm not a liar, am I? I'm not?" Of course she was not, I agreed, colluding as we all always did for the sake of peace and of something else: a half desire to help her, for things to be as she said they were. But she was. She lied in small matters, to tidy up embarrassments, and in larger matters, to avoid unpalatable truths. She lied floridly and beautifully, in her rare moments of relaxation, to make a story better. She was a breathless and breathtaking raconteur—not often, and sometimes overinsistently, but at her best reducing her audience to tears of helpless laughter. She also told other kinds of stories, all the time, in her later days, whenever we were in her company: monotonous, malevolent, unstructured plaints, full of increasingly fabricated evidence of wickedness. But that is another matter. I did not set out to write about that. I set out to write about my grandfather. About my paternal grandfather, whom I hardly knew, and about whom I know very little.

When my father was dying, I once came into his hospital room, and he sat up against his pillows and looked at me out of his own father's face. I had never thought of them as being alike. My father was a handsome man, in a very English way: blue-eyed, fair-skinned, with fine red-gold hair that very slowly lost its fire and turned rusty and then white. He had quite a lot of it still left when he died: very lively silvery hair, floating. He had a wide, straight, decisive mouth. None of these words recall him. His father, my grandfather, never had any hair that I can remember, and had heavy cheeks and a fuller, more petulant mouth. Seeing his face in my father's that day in the hospital, it occurred to me for the first time to wonder if my grandfather's hair had been red. He had had six children, of whom my father was the youngest, and all of whom had that fiery hair. My grandmother's, I was fairly sure, was dark brown. I did not tell my father that I had seen this resemblance, partly because it vanished when he spoke, partly because I thought of it as unflattering, since as a small child I had seen my grandfather as someone off-putting, stout, and old. The old were old in my early childhood, in the war years: there was an absolute barrier. Though he was seventy-seven when he died, my father never came to seem old as my grandfather did.

At the time when I saw my grandfather in him, he must have had about three months left to live. He was, by chance, in hospital in Amsterdam. It was a spotless and civilized hospital, full of seriously gentle doctors and nurses, all of whom spoke an English more nearly perfect than might have been found in any hospital at home. My father disliked his dependence, and they made it decorous for him. While he was there, which was several weeks, we all, my sisters and brother and I, visited him. The visiting hours were long—most of the afternoon and evening—and for most of this time, on most of these days, he talked to us. All my life, I had held it against him that he never talked to us. A barrister, later a judge, he worked with steady concentration, long, long hours, and was often away on circuit. During my early childhood, when his parents were alive, he had been away altogether, in the R.A.F., in the Mediterranean, in the war. He was called back from the Nuremberg trials to his father's deathbed, or so my mother had always said. What he had been doing there, if indeed he was there, I have never heard and cannot imagine. In those weeks in Amsterdam, he talked a great deal—about his father, about his mother, about his childhood—as he had never done. I don't know if he realized how very little he had ever said. He was a silent man but by no means a cold or distant man—not as you might think of a distant man, if you read that word, immediately.

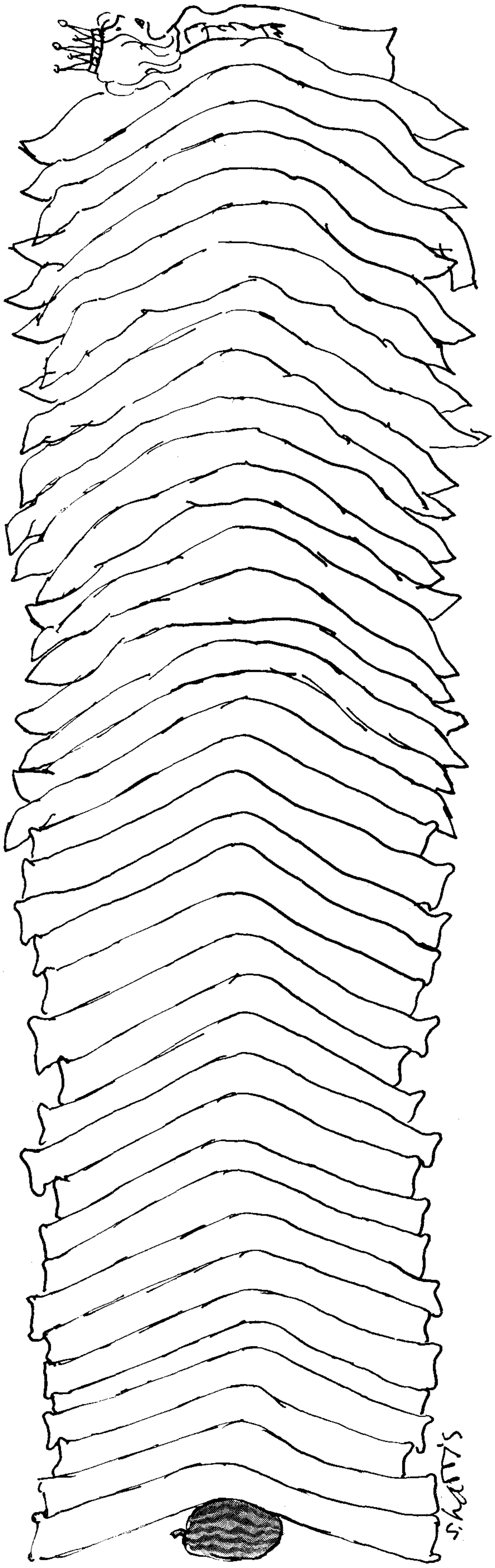
He was a judge. When I say that of him, I do not think of him as sitting in judgment. I think of him as a man with an unwavering instilled respect for evidence, for truth, for justice. When he delivered moral opinions, you could see that he was of his generation, time, and place: a good man, a Yorkshireman, ambitious to better himself; aware, largely from outside, of social discriminations and niceties of class; a late-convinced Quaker, a socialist turned social democrat. I respected his moral opinions; I share most of them, I am his child. But more than these opinions I respected and do respect in him his wish to be exact—a kind of abstract need which is somehow the essence of virtue. You might hold that love is the essence of virtue. We were very inhibited people. Even my mother, with her undisciplined rush of speech, fantasy, embarrassing candor, endless barbed outrage—even my mother was essentially inhibited in that sense. We didn't know how to talk about love. But truthfulness, yes.

R. MacMillan

All those weeks in hospital, he kept looking at what was happening with his respect for evidence. Once, toward the end, it faltered a little. He argued quite fiercely about the inexactness of the terms "benign" and "malignant." All growths are malignant, he said, if they are hurting you, if they are engrossing themselves at your expense. I could see he knew what he was doing —playing with words; his eyes were not taking his speech seriously. His father died of cancer of the prostate, or so my mother said. During this curious excursus about these adjectives, he said (as though I knew, which I didn't) that when that growth was removed from his own prostate some years ago, it had been entered on his record as "benign." "What do they mean, benign?" he said cunningly, deliberately confusing himself, looking at me to see if I, too, could be confused.

By the time of this conversation, he was back in London. I think he had been told what his expectations were. They were then in fact a bare three weeks, though I believed, and he may have believed, that he still had many months, maybe a year. He was partly being kind to me, too, confusing us both. He thought at that time a great deal about his father's death. He told me once—I am now almost sure that it was he who told me and not my mother—that his father's sufferings had been terrible. My father did not die of cancer of the prostate. Nor did he die, as far as we can tell, of the wholly unsuspected lymphoma whose cells the Dutch doctors discovered in the fluids they drained from him in the coronary ward where he was taken after collapsing in Schiphol Airport from the heart disease that he knew very well he had. My father did not suffer in his father's way.

HIS father's death was one of the main points of dispute in his relations with my mother during their last, troubled years. I am nearly sure it was this dispute that gave rise to the direct accusation of lying which so distressed my mother. She always maintained that she had been present at my grandfather's deathbed; she had been present, she led us to infer, at the moment of his death. The events of my grandfather's passing—the family intrigues and stresses, the testamentary injustices righted only by the hurried return from Germany of my father, the lawyer—were the subject of one of my mother's best tales. They had become part of my own shaky sense of my origins, a kind of Dickensian melodrama in which my mother had been a brisk and humane witness and my father a practical hero. I had a vision of this scene derived largely from Victorian novels and a little from my infant memories of my grandfather's house—huge, bleak, dark, polished, and gauntly uncomfortable. It all took place, in my imagination, in a kind of burnt-umber light, thick and brown. Various surrounding persons wore frilled and starched caps and aprons over black stuff dresses. Carafe and finely etched water glass were on a bedside cupboard, and my shrunk bald grandfather lay in a huge mound of feather pillows and mattresses suffering an ultimate drowsiness of too much painkiller and mortal weakness. The brown light drifted like heavy dust. I do not know where this vision came from; not from my mother, though it was indissolubly connected with her eyewitness narrative.



THE PRINCESS AND THE WATERMELON

In his last years my father maintained more and more stubbornly and acrimoniously that this account was a fabrication, that only he himself had been present, that my mother had kept well away. To make his point, he adduced her behavior during other family disasters and crises, and the evidence was on his side. My mother had a terror of direct confrontation with grief and pain. She avoided her own mother's dying; she did not attend a grandson's funeral. Nor did she go to Amsterdam. She affected to believe that this crisis was temporary and inconvenient. I have no idea what she thought in her heart. In any case, my father's evidence seemed on all logical grounds almost wholly persuasive. It was just that I discovered, during those weeks in Amsterdam, that I needed an idea of the past, of those long-dead grandparents, and that the idea I had, which was derived from my mother's accounts, was not to be trusted and bore no very clear relation to truth or reality. It was apparent that my father, too, during those last weeks, was trying to form a just and generous idea of his own father, whom he had fought at a cost to both of them. So his account had its own bias as well.

Perhaps I should now set out the elements of the family myth derived from my mother's accounts of my father's family. These accounts are dyed by her own perpetual anxiety about whether she herself was, in the last analysis, acceptable or unacceptable to them. Also by her own most necessary, most comfortable myth that she herself had represented to my father a human normality, a domestic warmth, an ease of communion quite absent from the chill household and extravagant passions amongst which he had grown up. As a small girl I believed what I was told, including this myth, despite having lived for months with my querulous and cross maternal grandmother, despite daily exhibitions of my mother's frustration and rage.

The idea she gave me of my father's family in Conisbrough, in the South Yorkshire coalfields, is skeletal and discontinuous. She liked to tell the same few exemplary episodes over and over: the strange behavior of my paternal grandmother with the teapot, my own first wintry visit to the dark Blythe House, the never quite explained aloofness or indifference of my father's family to my parents' wedding. She faltered in telling this, and I think told differing versions, in some of which my father's father attended briefly and in some not at all. Something had hurt her badly, and when my mother was hurt to the quick the narrative power became disjunct, the occasional sentence failed to reach its verb and died on a question mark. The hero of the wedding story was her own father, a red-whiskered, extravagantly outgoing workingman who had done her proud and had also in some way been hurt, or so I infer. I remember that grandfather well, my only relative given to loud laughter, practical jokes, and a disrespect for reticence. He was kind and frightening, and ambitious for his daughters in a practical way, though admitting to a regret that he had no vigorous, mechanically-minded son.

A TOAST FOR A COMPOSER'S WIDOW IN TASHKENT

I

The Uzbeks, whose exotic—or, as you would say, "Eastern"—midst
you have graced with gratitude
for nearly forty years, have a custom to which I object:
they expect their guest to offer the first toast.

II

The Uzbeks invite us to tea, a copious, joyless feast.
Elsewhere there might be a head bowed, a mention of someone's God.
But here nothing is blessed. Disks of bread are broken.
The hosts turn on their guest like a firing squad.
The ritual words—Peace, Friendship—are spoken.
Goblets downed. Gold teeth flash. The chairman nods.
It means: Now we can all go home.

III

But the only home where I can go—in Tashkent, at least—
is yours. You share with me your refuge
from untidiness and worse—from, as you would say, the East.
And together we play a trick or two
on the silence that is a widow's theme,
especially here, at night, in winter, in the wrong century
(on that, too, we have our exchange of views).
Thanks to you and the way you have kept it tuned,
the silence itself is a trick waiting to be played;
it needs only to be plucked, struck, or whispered to
to resonate pleasingly with diminished chords of what is gone.

IV

I remark on the photos of your friends, who pose
on the shelves of your world. Some I recognize:

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The central figure of the Conisbrough family was in one sense my grandfather, who is presented as a Victorian despot, purblind to the feelings of his wife and children, wholly devoted to his business, which was the manufacture and sale of boiled sweets. He seems to have spent no time in the company of his six children, and to have had no thought for their future other than that they should be incorporated, in due course, into the family business. My grandmother, a devout Methodist, was characterized, always, by both my parents, as "a saint." My mother went in considerable awe of her, though she would also utter witty and disparaging comments on her ungainly housekeeping, and imply that the two women had, in the end, come to love and respect each other. The eldest son, my Uncle Barnet, was crippled at birth, and spent his twenty-nine years confined to a wheelchair. His mother, said mine, had devoted herself wholly to this helpless son, "did everything for him herself," insisting on lifting and changing and pushing even when her strength was unequal to it. As a result, my mother implied, the five others were neglected—were, in her phrase, "left to drag themselves up as best they might." They were all, also, my mother claimed, extraordinarily gifted, intelligent, creative, vital, but, apart from my father, stunted by my grandfather's incapacity to imagine that education conferred any benefits, or that any life other than the making of boiled sweets could possibly be desirable. They went to the local grammar school, where my mother met my father when both of them arrived in the scholarship intake at age eleven. From there the children were removed as early as possible; given, in my mother's phrase, "any *material* thing they desired;" and set to work at the sugar-boiling.

Barnet, Arthur, Gladys, Sylvia, Lucy, and Freddie, who was my father. I met some of them, extremely briefly, though not Barnet and Sylvia. They are not part of my life, only of stories and sharp pictures, which, if they have anything in common, have the idea of furious energy, unmanaged passion, thwarted and gone to waste. The Arthur I saw I associate with thick carpets and golf clubs; the Arthur of the myth wanted to live dangerously, was a skilled pilot, a motorcycle speedway racer in the Isle of Man, a volunteer rear gunner in the First World War. He flew, my mother said, round Conisbrough Castle, a gloomy ruined circular tower, visible in my childish imagination from the upper windows of Blythe House. I see him roaring and dipping, looping the loop and circling, watched by the red-headed siblings envying the brief speed and freedom. The only other thing I know about Arthur is the manner of his death. This story is my father's, unusually. In his later years, Arthur had a heart attack, from which he recovered; assumed, without evidence, that he had an undivulged cancer and a short life expectancy; and went out to live dangerously again, thus precipitating another heart attack and a fatal car collision with the back of a stationary bus. "Wine, women, and song,"

the poet there, with the jaw of a prize camel,
the cheeks of a Tatar, and melodramatic eyes.
You remark on the absence of mirrors
and of photos of yourself in your youth—
I do not feel great pity. Nor, indeed, am I expected to.

V

Leave it to you to live with a pet crane.
For some, a symbol of longevity. For you, merely the
 perfect touch.
A bird unable to fly, a woman to walk. You cancel each
 other's pain.
In such perfect proportions, so little can compensate
 for so much.
The bird purrs like a cat, a symbol of domesticity;
the creature that long since forgot how to sing
remembers how your husband once taught it to dance
—remembers, and reminds us now. It flaps its one
 good wing
and performs on the off chance
that we might applaud. We do.
The dancer defecates on the Party Organ.
"Their best contributor!" We agree and laugh.

VI

Come spring, you say, the bird will inhabit the garden:
"A microclimate!" A note of triumph in your voice.
The crane can imagine itself in Egypt
and you in the century of your choice.
So here's to the microclimate
and here's to the microseason.
Here's to you, my hostess,
to Peace, Friendship, and Treason!

—Strobe Talbott

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my father said darkly, partly shocked by his brother's failure to examine the evidence properly, partly envious of the extravagance. Arthur never left Conisbrough and the boiled sweets, however. I remember him red and solid and a little bluff. I remember a resemblance to his father.

Gladys married young, and briefly, because she had to, my mother said. She married a coal miner and divorced him with considerable firmness once the immediate need for respectability was past. My mother did not expatiate on Gladys, whom she clearly disliked. I can't remember how old I was when she first told me these few facts—old enough to have read some D. H. Lawrence as well as suffered "Jane Eyre," old enough to imagine a romantic red-haired girl in a long serge skirt running through fields, hiding behind hedges, with courage and fear, to a place of secret and absolute emotion. I see always a dry-stone wall and gray-green, slightly sooty Yorkshire hill grass. This imagination was daunted by my incapacity to connect this girl with the wild, aging aunt who visited us briefly in Sheffield when I was thirteen and presented us with two huge, pink-cheeked, rose-pouting, lace-frilled dolls in cellophane-covered boxes and a lavish set of diverse manicuring tools in a soft red leather case. My mother made this transient visitor most unwelcome, and she never came again. My mother, in fact, hated any incursion by any guest into her fenced and indomitably comfortable domestic territory. I remember them sitting at tea, at two corners of the dining table, my mother's mouth pinched with disapproval and distaste. My aunt was large and alarming. She wore an odd hat, which I have recreated as a bright-purple silken turban, though I think that is my invention, and had a great unruly mass of wiry gingery hair and very sharp pale-blue eyes, close to the bridge of a prominent beaked nose. My mother poured tea, and waited quite obviously for the visit to be over. My aunt began various jerky speeches which trailed away; her movements were abrupt and awkward. After she had gone, my mother spoke with concentrated and sharply expressed disparagement of the vulgarity and unnecessary extravagance of the silly presents. It was only this year that my younger sister told me that she had found the dolls magical and beautiful.

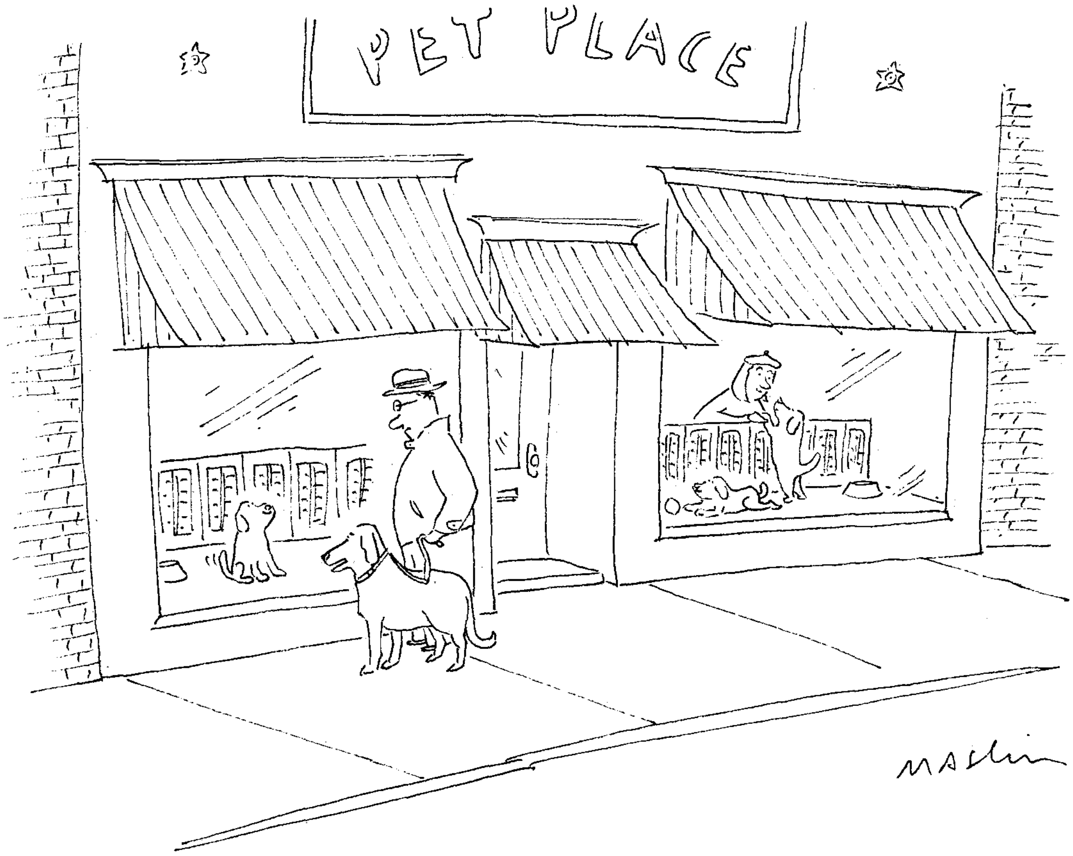
Later, Aunt Gladys spent several years in a caravan perched on the North Yorkshire coast. I remember my father's alarm when the radio reported that part of these cliffs had been swept away, perhaps in the terrible storms of 1953. I remember his going north to sort out some trouble in which Gladys had threatened a neighbor with a garden fork. She was, my mother said, "quite mad." Certainly she died, after some years, in a mental ward. My father went to visit her, during her last years, and reported that she failed to recognize him. He never, I think, described her or her acts to me, except during those last, null years, when he would say sadly that it made you wonder what it was all for. I found her story hopeful and exciting, against the evidence. What I was afraid of, in the days when I first learned about her, was the "normal," the respectable, the quotidian domesticity that my mother claimed was happiness, suffered with savage resentment, and exacted payment for from those she cared for.

My grandfather's two youngest children carried out acts of considered rebellion and escape. My mother's favorite tale, apart from the tale of the teapot perhaps, was the tale of my father's act of severance. She herself, a girl from the working class, from a back-to-back house with no inside plumbing, but encouraged by her father, had won unprecedented scholarships to Cambridge, where she went, in what I imagine as a frail tremor of intellectual will and enormous social terror, to read English. Her Cambridge was the earthly paradise and the Queen of Hearts' garden of arbitrary obstacles and disgraces rolled into one. Until she died, she went over and over moments of solecism she had too late detected in those years. She dreamed—at least yearly, perhaps more often—that she was to be forced to resit her finals with no warning, and consequently to be exposed as a fraud. My father, who was, my mother acknowledged, the only student in her grammar-school class who did better than she did in exams, was briskly removed from school at seventeen by his father to become a commercial traveller in boiled sweets.

My mother said that this was a black time of his life, and that he became very ill, frightening his mother once or twice by fainting into the coal bucket. The "into" was part of her graphic style. As a little girl, I had a clear vision of his pale limbs somehow telescoped and contracted into this dirty receptacle, like a discarded dead root, though I think now that he was probably trying to lift it, that the blood drained from his head. I knew exactly where this coal bucket stood in Blythe House. It stood on the threshold between the kitchen and the cellar, whose dark door led into a frightening blackness I remember stepping nervously back from. I must have been three. The coal bucket can never have been there, but I associate the two blacknesses and the fear of uncontrolled falling. My mother said my father would never afterward talk about this time. In Amsterdam he did, a little, half apologizing to some unseen presence for the great trouble he had caused by his mixture of deviousness and distress. Unknown to his father, he had worked, my mother said, secretly and alone and late at night to take the Cambridge entrance exam, had saved and scrimped every penny of what she called his "pocket money" and what he later, in the hospital, called "my wages," and had finally won an award to read law. So he had confronted his father, and explained that he had saved, from his allowance, enough money for his first year's fees and lodging, and that he meant now to go to Cambridge, because that was what he wanted to do.

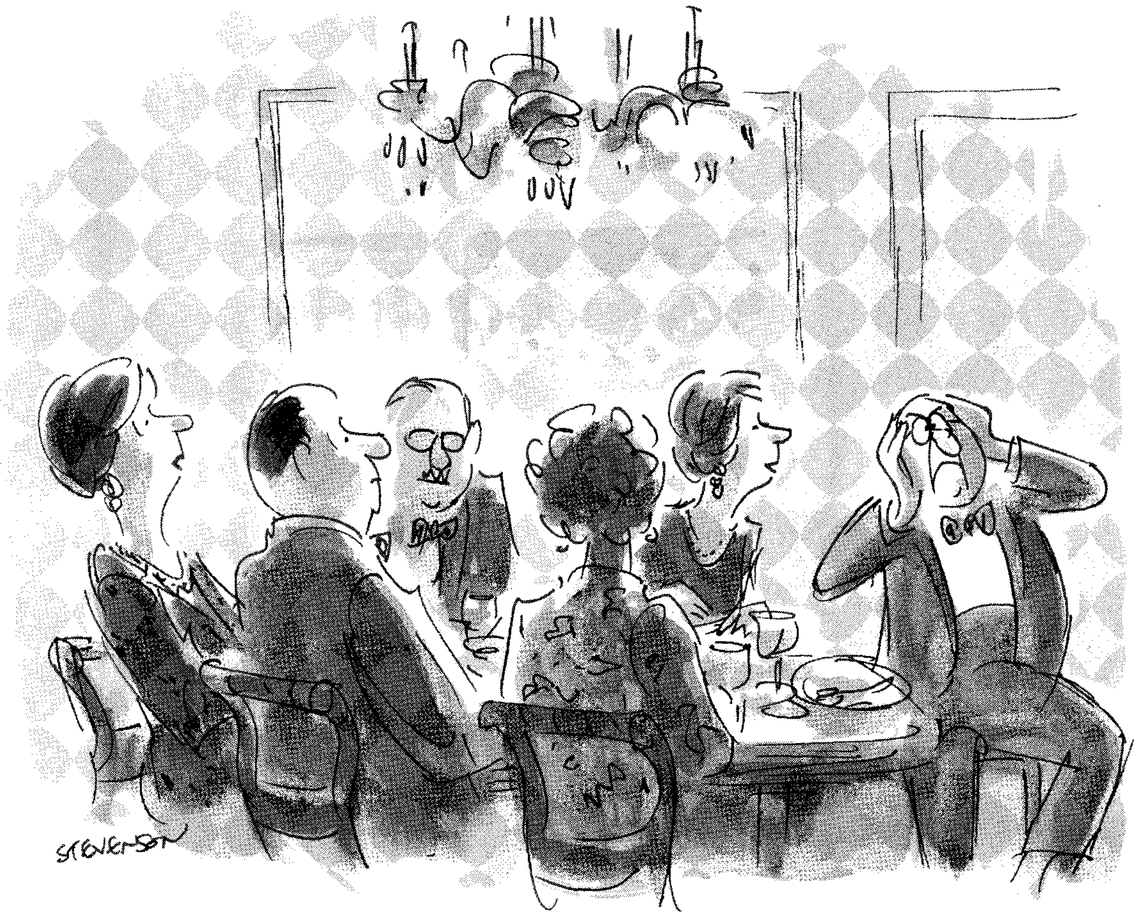
The end of this tale always puzzled my imagination. My grandfather, my mother said, had been filled with pride and delight at this announcement, and had "fallen upon your father's neck"—an unlikely motion, I always thought, in that portly and rigid trunk. I think now the phrase derives from the good father's reception of the Prodigal Son, but that is confusing, for my grandfather's hypothetical embrace welcomed revolt and prodigality. In any case, my mother said, Pa had immediately put a thousand pounds into my father's bank account, in order that he should live comfortably at Cambridge. No sentence of my grandfather's speech was recorded in my mother's account of this episode, which, although dramatically delightful, raises problems about his nature, and the true nature of his unreasonable rigidity and his children's inability to communicate with him. How could they have had no inkling that he would be proud or pleased? Was he capricious? Stubborn? Easily enraged? Had his children ever tried to explain to him what they wanted or hoped for? Had they inherited from my saintly grandmother an expectation of self-denial and strict obedience which precluded any attempt at dialogue? Was he formidable, was he wrathful, was he stony, was he emotional? No one has told me; I do not know anything about him. My father said, "Pa tried to do the best for us according to his lights, but he couldn't conceive of things outside his business." Where did it all come from then—the drive, the ambition, the passions of his offspring? I associate him with Dombey, if only because I think my father did. He once said that Dickens' observation of Florence Dombey was a miracle, that a child neglected and passed over and denigrated does indeed become more and more self-critical, more anxious to please, to find authority reasonable. But he himself did not submit for long. He went to Cambridge, and did well, and had tea in punts with my pretty and fragile mother.

The story of Lucy parallels that of my father, in some ways. This again is my mother's version. At some point, my grandfather had sent Lucy and Sylvia on a world cruise—for what reason my mother did not say, though she made it clear that in her view a world cruise was a poor substitute for higher education and some degree of financial independence. During this journey Lucy was ravished by the open spaces and free life of Australia. It was an idea that, at second hand, moved my father, too. When I was myself sitting Cambridge Entrance and he was a very successful junior barrister, or perhaps during the first, slacker year after he took silk and became a queen's counsel, he found time to write a thick, escapist novel in which the hero moved from the dark,



"He *is* cute, but you already have a dog."

dirty, and dangerous world of the Sheffield steel mills to a land of clear, clean deserts and great flocks of wheeling, pearly parakeets. He threatened occasionally to emigrate. It was his generation's dream in the years of austerity and the choking class structure and battle fatigue. Lucy did in fact carry out this nineteen-forties postwar dream, appearing one morning at breakfast in Blythe House to announce that she and a young woman friend had passages booked to sail that very day. "That very day" is my mother's contribution, and perhaps suspect, but the tale is the same. My grandfather could only tolerably be dealt with by faits accomplis. His reactions to this announcement are not known to me. Lucy went to a life of violin-playing and the breeding of Airedales. In the early years of his retirement, my father went out to see the deserts for himself and came back troubled about the corruption of the aborigines by alcohol, and perhaps a little lowered, as a man is whose dream vision has been replaced by a solid and limited reality. I was glad he never emigrated, for I early developed a passion for languages, and thus for Europe. Despite his vision of deserts, my father died European, as a direct consequence of his journey up the Rhine, which he thought over, as he sat in his high Dutch hospital room, talking to the Humanist Society visitor about the novels of Conrad and Charlotte Brontë she brought him, and to a young doctor about the kinds of hawk planing over the roofs which were all he could see. "It was civilized," he said with satisfaction of this last painful venture, his Rhine journey. He described cranes and herons and castles and the moonlit water. And his own defeat by a brief climb from mooring place to town center. He was also a good raconteur, another sort than my mother—deliberate, weighing his words, judicious, telling you some things and holding others back.



"I'm surprised. I understood he was an extremely good listener."

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WHEN did my mother first tell me the story of Sylvia? I must have been too young to be told it, whenever it was, for I remember it as my first absolute confirmation that my mother's myth was untrue: that the hearth's warmth did not keep off the cold blast, that there was no safety. Before, I thought there were two sorts of people in the world, those to whom terrible things happened, as in books and on the news, and those condemned to the protection of normality and the threat of boredom and custom. I believe my mother told me Sylvia's story during the war itself, while we were living in Pontefract, where she kept house miserably while my father was away, except for a brief period of anxious and exalted activity when she taught English to grammar-school boys. I loved her then. Then she talked to me about subjects and predicates, Tennyson and Browning, the Lady of Shalott, and not about household dirt and failures of attentiveness. I should already have known about uncertainty. I was a gloomy child and was, in my secret soul, certain that my father would never return from wherever he had abruptly vanished to, hung around with canvas buckets and kit bags, his red hair shorn under his ugly folded blue cap. There was a boy, too, at school, who died one night of diabetes. I remember being distressed that I couldn't really *know* he was dead, that everything went on just as if this weren't so. Perhaps I only really learned about Sylvia later, but associate the learning with these other losses.

Sylvia had fallen in love, on that fateful world cruise, with someone whom my mother described as a "remittance man" in South Africa. They had married, and my grandfather had provided for them by offering them a workman's cottage he owned in Conisbrough. There was a child, another Sylvia, who was, I believe, born a little before me. They were very unhappy. The remittance man, according to my mother, was "very cold." She said, "Pa didn't understand. The man came from a warm country. He was desperately cold." My saintly grandmother visited—furtively, my mother managed to imply—with blankets and hot soup. She provided these also for the local poor. Quite what happened to the remittance man I am unable to ascertain. As a little girl, I thought the word "remittance" meant that he was somehow provisional and not to be considered. Perhaps he went home, to the hot sun and the gold mines and his life before the incursion of my tragic aunt. I have since given him, in my imagination, the features of a South African novelist I know—thoughtful, considerate, secretive, withdrawn. When I was little, I saw him as a Gilded Youth in a boater.

When I was only just born, Sylvia killed both herself and her small daughter. I know this because I inherited certain toys belonging to this destroyed cousin. There was a dog—a nightdress case—zipped, furry, black and white, and peaceably couchant, whom I loved for years before I discovered his provenance. And after. I remember shouting with terrible courage, when some clearance of outgrown toys was proposed, "You can't throw Wops away. He was Sylvia's." Knowing I did not know what this sentence meant to them, using it to save my dog, shamed. "Your father smoked terribly for two years after Sylvia died," my mother said once. This at least explained why he, who never smoked, owned a chased-silver cigarette case. I could not imagine his feelings. My mother had reduced her accounts of Sylvia to various manageable dicta. Sylvia, she gave the impression, was the most gifted of the gifted gaggle. She could have done all sorts of things, my mother said, and always added, "It was like putting a racehorse to draw a milk cart." She said also, scornfully, "She was no housewife, she had no idea." I imagined a hutlike house, stone-floored, coal-fired, with barely room to turn round in. There must, however, have been a gas oven.

I think I took Sylvia's fate as a warning against both brilliance and sexual passion. My father used to be partly amused, but ultimately more alarmed, by any evidence of extravagant passions in his daughters. He was a romantically-minded man, and believed that the first lover is always the most important. He was a virtuous man, and was, it seems clear, steadfastly faithful to my mother. In Amsterdam, he spoke of his brother Arthur with a kind of mild envy. He felt he himself had always been too cautious. "When I come before my Maker," he said as he sipped the glass of wine that the doctors, despairing of cure, had permitted him, "which I do not expect will happen, I shall have to beg him to forgive me my virtues." My mother said he had learned from the others' disasters, he had learned to be careful and to value security and domestic peace.

My mother's accounts of my grandmother's selflessness were like pearls, or sugarcoated pills, grit and bitterness polished into roundness by comedy and my mother's worked-upon understanding of my grandmother's real meaning. While I cannot remember any quoted instance of my grandfather's speech, I can remember various sayings of my grandmother, including her welcome of my infant self, on my first visit. There she stood on the doorstep, my mother said, rigid and doubtful—I imagine it for some reason taking place on a snowy evening, in the early dark. She did not say "How lovely to see you" or "Let me see the baby" or "Come in and get warm" but "It hardly seems worth the trouble of all that packing just to come here. Babies are always best in their own house, I think." My mother would always add a long explanation of this ungraciousness: my grandmother was genuinely self-deprecating, she was very well aware of the real trouble of transporting a baby with all her equipment, she was thanking my mother for having made the effort. The grit inside the pearly sugarcoating was a fear of rejection by both women, perhaps.

"I nearly just turned round and went home," my mother always said, and always added, "But it was just her manner; she meant very well, really." And "She was really very fond of me, she came to see me as a daughter, I was a favorite."

The famous teapot story is another such instance. It took place, I think, in the war, during petrol rationing. My grandmother was driven over by the chauffeur from Conisbrough to Pontefract to take tea with my mother and to see a new grandchild. She sat briefly, talking to my mother. But when offered tea she stood up abruptly and said no, no, thank you, she had stayed too long, she must get back to pour my grandfather's tea for him, he expected it. My mother's emphasis in this story was on the childish helplessness of my grandfather, who, with a houseful of servants, could not stretch out a hand and lift his own teapot. My grandmother's formidable manner and her excessive dutifulness were part of each other, in my mother's vision—a kind of folly of decorum in which the result was the rejection of my mother's carefully prepared tea and cakes. "All that way, and the petrol, and the chauffeur's time, wasted just to pour his cup of tea," my mother would say scornfully and yet with fear.

This story runs into the story of my grandmother's death. Even in her last illness, my mother would say, when the old woman was weak and in great pain, my grandfather would not allow her to sleep alone in a spare bedroom. She gave the impression, my mother, of the elderly man howling like a lost

child, "creating" on landings until my grandmother wearily "dragged herself" downstairs again, to his side. "He couldn't sleep without her," my mother said. And "He had no consideration."

This inarticulate crying out is almost the only image of my grandfather's speech I have. I see him pacing in an improbable nightshirt, beside himself. My mother's contempt for male helplessness was edged with savagery. This operated even during my father's last illness, which she persisted in seeing as a fantasy and a betrayal, and which she was sure could have been better handled. Her original announcement of his collapse included the authoritative and unfounded assertion that he'd be perfectly all right in a day or two, there was no need for anyone to bother. Her account of my grandmother's death is riddled with doubtful elements, but I have nothing else certain to hold, or imagine; my father never got round to telling his version of that story, so the enraged and frantically obtuse old man persists in my memory.

I had almost forgotten what was perhaps my mother's favorite tale, the perfect example of the fecklessness and neglect of which my father, before he found her, had been the object. Two of the sisters—she was never quite sure which, Gladys and Sylvia, Sylvia and Lucy—had gone out into the fields to play, taking with them the baby, my father, whom they put for safety into a horse trough and wholly forgot, returning home without him, remembering his whereabouts only when, many hours later, my grandmother asked where he was. The child was discovered by searchers, my mother said, lying half in and half out of the water in the stone trough, as the dark fell, quite abandoned. She always affected to find this story amusing, and always instilled into it a very understandable note of bitter indignation against everyone: the girls, the mother, the father, the state of affairs that could allow this to happen. When my father returned to the same story in Amsterdam, it was with a kind of Arcadian pleasure.

"We ran wild," he said with retrospective delight. "We had so few restrictions; we had each other, and the fields and the stables—we had an amazingly free childhood, we ran wild." His little room in the Dutch hospital was warmly lit, for a hospital room. He had bad days when he huddled under the blankets and shivered with final cold. He had good days when he sat up and talked about the world of his childhood, the pony and trap, the taste of real fresh bread, the journeys they made in the pony trap to the races, coming back in the dusk singing all together, the poems they wrote, the amazing variety of wildflowers there then were. "I grew up before the motorcar," he said. "You won't really be able to imagine. It was a world of horses. Everything smelled, rather pleasantly, of horses. The milk was fresh and tasty. There were real apples and plums."

DURING those weeks, during that unaccustomed talking, which despite everything was pleasant and civilized, as he meant it to be, he did try to construct a tale, a myth, a satisfactory narrative of his life. He talked about what it was like to be part of a generation twice disrupted by world war; he talked about his own ambitions, and more generally about how he had noticed that those who felt they had achieved nothing found it harder to die. He talked above all about his childhood and particularly, perhaps, though not illuminatingly, about his father. He talked of how his Aunt Flora's coffin had been refused houseroom, even for a night, by relatives who disapproved of her religious views.

He knew he was dying of heart trouble; he had set out for the Rhine precisely because he sensed he was very ill. He was surprised about the cancer. "I had no idea," he said to me, with a kind of grave amusement at having been caught out in ignorance, ignoring evidence. "It never occurred to me that *that* was what these doctors were worried about." And, on another occasion, casually, but with a certain natural rhetorical dignity that was part of him, "You mustn't think I mind. I've nothing to regret and I feel I've come to the end. Don't misunderstand me—no doubt in the near future there will be moments of panic and terror. But you mustn't think I mind." He said that for my sake, but he was a truthful man. He was already steeling himself against the panic and terror, which were in the event much briefer and more cramped than we then supposed.

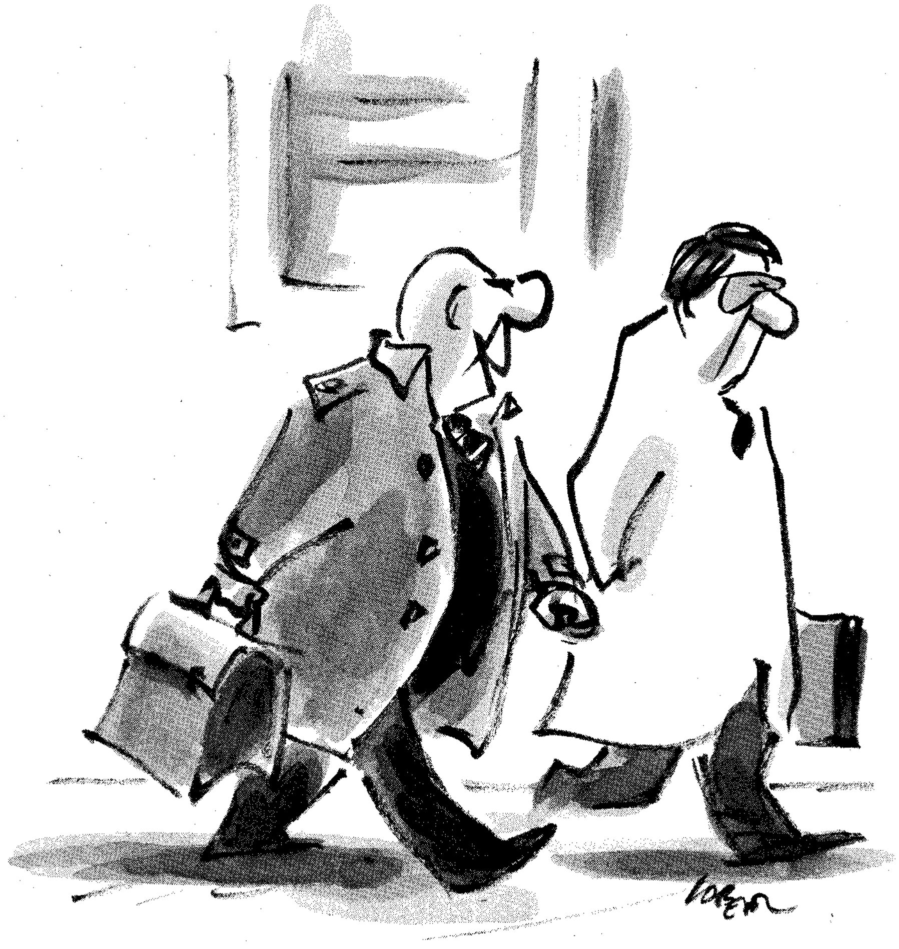
He had often said before, though he didn't repeat it, at least to me, during those weeks, that a man's children are his true and only immortality. As a girl, I had been made uncomfortable by that idea. I craved separation. "Each man is an island" was my own statement of a delightful, if melancholy, truth. I was like Auden's version of Prospero's rejecting brother, Antonio, "by choice myself alone." But during those extreme weeks in Amsterdam I thought about origins. I thought about my grandfather. I thought also about certain myths of origin which I had pieced together in childhood to explain things that were important: my sense of northernness; my fear of art; the promised end. By a series of elaborate coincidences, two of these myths had become inextricably involved in what was happening. The first was Ragnarök—the Last Battle of Norse legend—and the second was Vincent van Gogh.

I went to see the "Götterdämmerung," at Covent Garden, on the last night of my father's doomed Rhine journey. I had a bad cough, which embarrassed me. Now whenever I cough I see Gunther and Gutrune, like proto-Nazis in their heavy palace beside the broad and glittering artificial water, and think—as I thought then, as I always think when I think of the nineteen-thirties—of my father in those first years of my life, knowing and fearing what was coming, appalled by appeasement, volunteering for the R.A.F. When I was clearing his things, I found a copy of the Speech Delivered to the Reichstag, April 28, 1939, by Adolf Hitler, Führer and Chancellor. It was stored in a box of family photographs, the only thing in there that was not a photograph, as though it were an intimate part of our family history. I remember thinking in the opera house about the similarities and dissimilarities between Prospero and Wotan. I thought in the red dark that, though both had broken staffs, compared to the Renaissance rough magician, Wotan the nineteenth-century Allfather was enclosed in claustrophobic Victorian family—was essentially a social being. A week earlier, in "Walküre," when Fricka berated Wotan I had thought with pleasure of my father proceeding slowly and freely along the great river.

When I was a small child in Pontefract in the early years of the war, my favorite book, the book that set my imagination working, was "Asgard and the Gods: Tales and Traditions of Our Northern Ancestors." 1880. It was illustrated with steel engravings: of Wodan's Wild Hunt; of Odin tied between two fires, his face threatening and beautiful; of Ragnarök—the Last Battle—showing Surtur with his flaming head come out of Muspelheim, the gaping Fenris-Wolf about to destroy Odin himself, Thor thrusting his shield arm into the maw of the risen sea serpent Jörmungander. I remember the shock of reading about the Last Battle, in which all the heroes, all the gods, were destroyed forever. It had not until then occurred to me that a story could end like that. Though I had suspected that real life might: my expectations were gloomy. I found this idea exciting. I knew "Asgard" backward before my mother told me about Sylvia, that is certain. I remember sitting in church listening to the story of Joseph and his coat of many colors and thinking that this story was no different from the stories in "Asgard," and less moving than they were. I remember going on to think that Ragnarök seemed "truer" than the Resurrection. After Ragnarök, a very tentative, new, vegetable world began a new cycle, washed clean of blood and fire and gold. I see now, rereading the book, as I still do, that I may have been influenced, in these childish steps in literary theory and the Higher Criticism, by the tone of the authors of "Asgard," who rationalize Baldur and Hödur into summer and winter, who turn giants into mountain ranges and Odin's wrath into wild weather, and who talk about the superior truths illustrated by the beautiful Christian stories. They are not Frazer, equating gods gleefully with trees, but they set you on course for him. I associated Our Northern Ancestors in my mind with my father's family—wild, extravagant, stony, large, and frightening. They were something of which I was part. They were serious gods, as the Greeks, with their love affairs and capriciousness, were not.

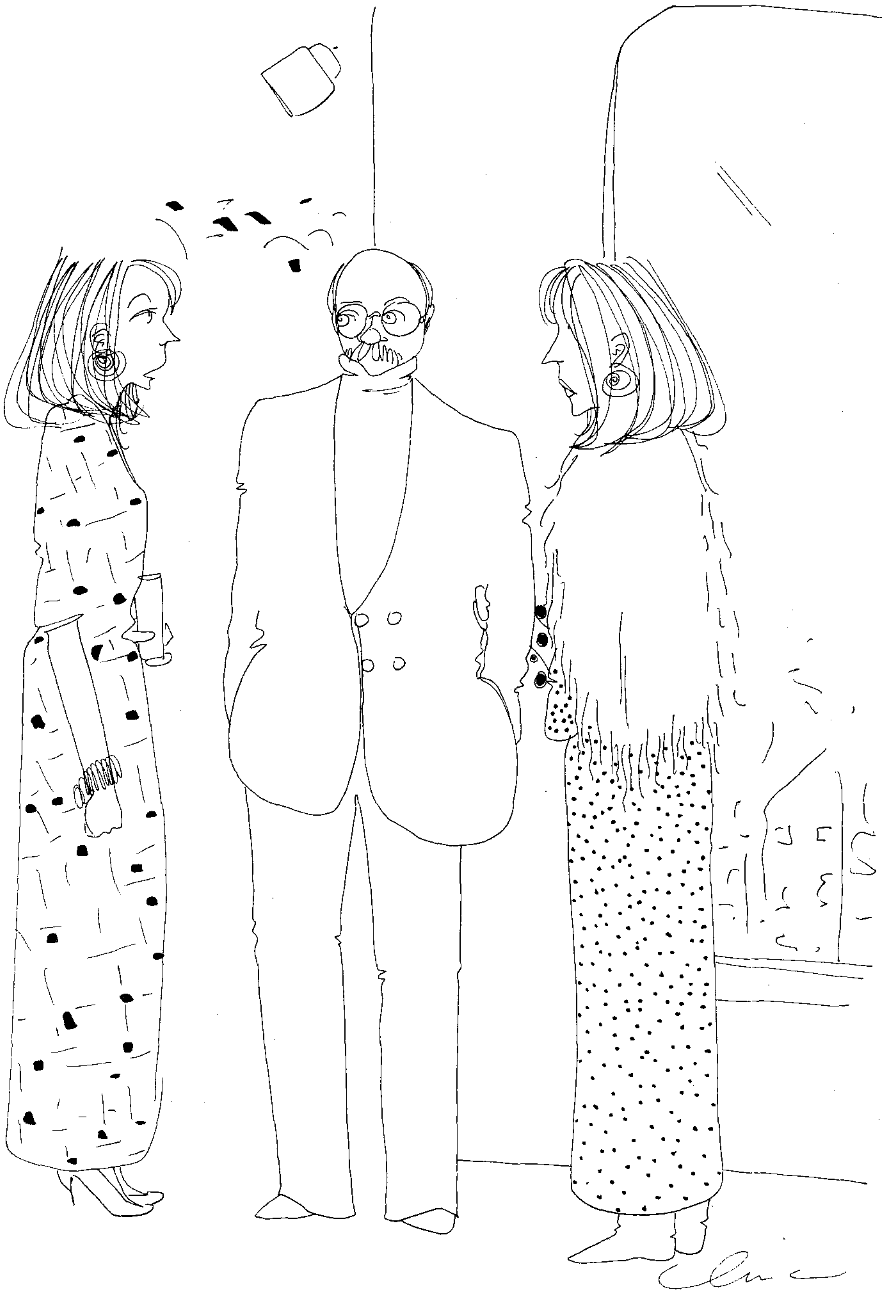
The book was, however, not my father's but my mother's, bought as a crib for the Ancient Icelandic and Old Norse which formed an obligatory part of her degree course. I can't remember if she gave it to me to read or if I found it. I do remember that she fed the hunger for reading; there was always a book and another book and another. She never underestimated what we could take. She was not kind to her children as social beings; she screamed at invited friends, she felt and communicated extremes of nervous terror. But to readers she was generous and resourceful. I knew she had been the kind of child I was, speechless and a reader. I knew.

It was with my mother, on the other hand, that the van Gogh myth



"I used to wear a rug, and then I decided that bald says integrity—right?"

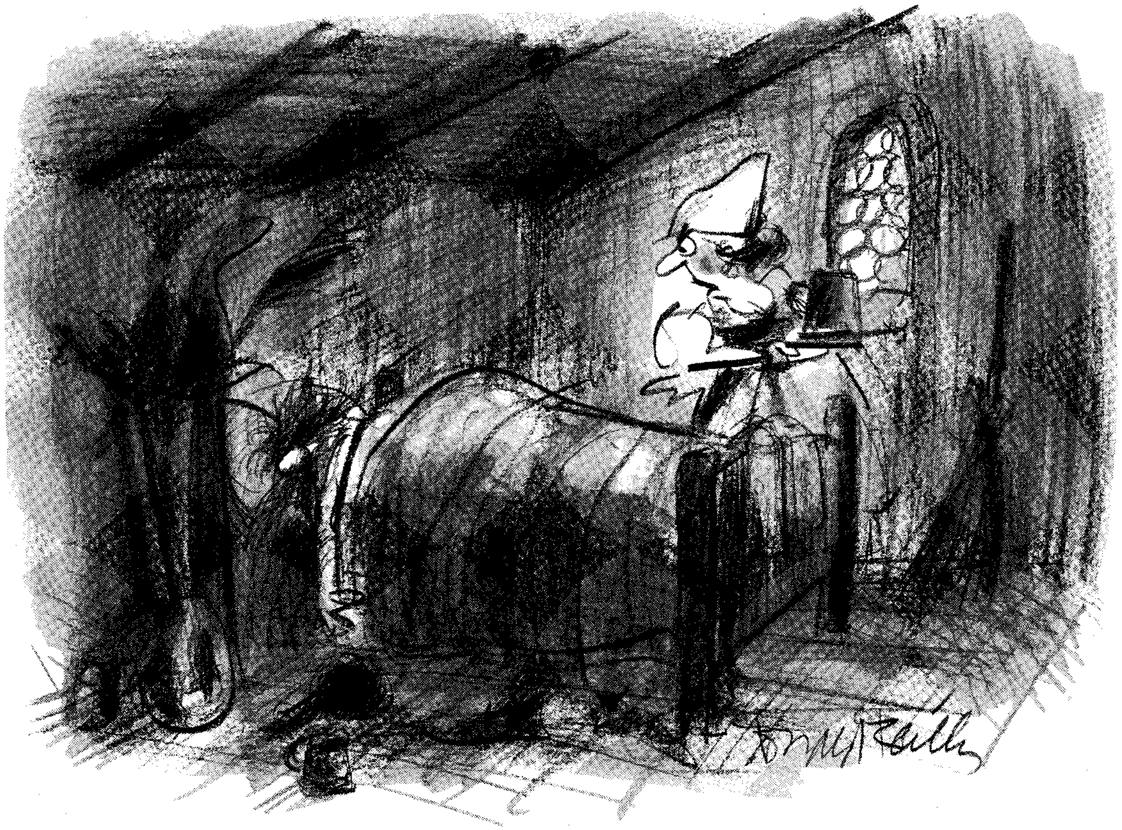
originated. Her family name had a Dutch shape and sound to it. Her family came, in part, from The Potteries, from the Five Towns, and a myth had grown up (with no foundation in evidence) that they were descended from Dutch Huguenots who came here in the time of William the Silent—practical, warm, Protestant, hardworking craftsmen, with a buried and secret artistic strain. This Dutch quality was a kind of gemütlichkeit, the quality with which my mother had hoped to warm and mitigate the wuthering and chill of my father's upbringing. In Sheffield, just after the war, we had various reproductions of paintings by Vincent van Gogh around our sitting-room wall. There was one of the bridges at Arles, one of the sunnier ones, where the water is aquamarine and women are peacefully spreading washing. There were the boats on the beach at Les Saintes-Maries de la Mer, which I recognized with shock when I went there years later. There was a young man in a hat and a yellow jacket whom I know to have been the son of Roulin, the postman, and there was a Zouave in full Oriental trousers and red fez, sitting on a bench on a floor whose perspective rose dizzily and improperly toward him. There were also two Japanese prints, and what I think now must have been a print of Vermeer's "Little Street" in the Rijksmuseum—a housefront of great peace and steadiness, with a bending woman in a passageway on the left. I always, from the very earliest, associated these working women in Dutch streets with my mother. I associated the secret inwardness of the houses—de Hooch's houses even more than Vermeer's—with my mother's domestic myth: necessary tasks carried out in clear light, in their own confined but meaningful spaces. In my memory, I have superimposed a de Hooch on the Vermeer, for I remember in the picture a small blond Dutch child, with a cap and serious expression, close to the woman's skirts, who is my small blond self, gravely paying attention, as my mother would have liked.



"How are you and New York City getting along?"

• •

The Sheffield house in whose sitting room these images were deployed was one of a pair of semi-detached houses purchased as a wedding present for my father by his father, who could clearly never do things by halves, who thought, rightly, that it would be an investment. We left one of these houses for Pontefract during the war, in fear of bombs, and, with peacetime, came back to the other. At the period when I most clearly remember the van Goghs and the Vermeer/de Hooch, the second house was in a state of renovation and redecoration. My grandfather had died, various large and dignified pieces of furniture had come to be fitted into the house, and there was money to spend on wallpaper and curtains. I remember one very domestic paper, a kind of blush pink with regular cream dots on it, a sugar-sweet paper that my parents repeatedly expressed themselves surprised to like, and about which I was never sure. In my memory, the van Goghs hang tamed on this delicately suburban ground, but in fact they cannot have done so. I am almost sure that paper was in the dining room, where my Aunt Gladys was flustered by my enraged and aproned mother. In any case, my earliest acquaintance with the paintings was as pleasantly light decoration around a three-piece suite. This was part of what the painter meant his work to be: sensuous pleasure for everyone. When did I discover differently? Certainly before I myself went to Arles, before Cambridge, in the



"If I never hear another goddam 'Hey, nonny-nonny' out of you, it'll be too soon for me!"

• •

nineteen-fifties, and saw that tortured and aspiring cypresses were exact truths, of their kind.

When my father collapsed at Schiphol, I was writing a novel in which the idea of van Gogh stalked in and out of a text about puritanical northern domesticity. There was nowhere I would rather find myself than the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. I was reading and rereading his letters. He wrote about the Dutch painters and their ability to paint darkness, to paint the brightness of black. He wrote about the hunger for light, and about how his "northern brains" in that clear, heavy, sulfur-yellow southern light were oppressed by its power. He was not cautious, he lived dangerously. He felt his brains were electric and his vision too much for his body. Yet he remained steadily intelligent and analytic, mixing his colors, *thinking* about the nature of light, of one man's energy, of one man's death. He painted the oppression of his fellow-inmates in the hospital in Saint-Rémy. He was a decorous and melancholic northerner turned absolute and wild. He observed and reobserved his own grim red-headed skull and his muscles without gentleness, without self-love, without evasion. He was truthful and mad.

In the mornings I went and looked at his paintings, and in the afternoons I took the tram out to my father's echoing hospital, carrying little parcels of delicacies—smoked fish, fruits, chocolates. In the afternoons and the evenings, he talked. He talked, among other things, about the van Gogh prints, which turned out to have been his own—his choice, nothing to do with my "Dutch" mother. He talked particularly about the portrait of the Zouave. That was on one of his good days. I had bought him some freesias and some dahlias. I had not realized, in all those years, that he was one of the rare people who cannot smell freesias. He claimed that on this occasion he could. "Just a ghost of a smell, just a hint, I *think* I can smell it," he said. He helped me to mend one of the dahlias with cellophane tape, where I had bent its stem. "You can keep them alive," he said, "if you keep the water channels open. I've often kept things alive successfully for surprisingly long periods that way." He talked about van Gogh's Zouave, the one of the family prints I had liked least, as a child, because the floor made me giddy and because the man was alien, both his clothes and his face. It was, said my father precisely, "a very powerful image of pure male sexuality. Absolutely straightforward and simple. It was always my favorite." He looked at me over the top of his little gold half-glasses and smiled.

"Van Gogh went to find the Zouaves in the brothel in Arles," I said. I was going to go on to say that van Gogh believed that the expense of energy in sex was bad for his, or anyone's, art. But he wasn't listening. He didn't really think I knew anything about van Gogh. He had the idea that he might get well enough to go round to the Rijksmuseum and see the Vermeers. He did. My sister took him, alarmingly unstable and determined. He wanted to hear music. He wanted to fit things in. Sometimes I think he meant to shorten his time by living well, so that he would die quickly.

The Dutch doctors put life into him with nitroglycerin drips and blood transfusions. And then there were the days when he trembled with cold. He told me one day, making a story out of it, how he had walked to the lavatory, lurching along walls, creeping along corridors, gripping bed foot and doorknob, only to find a queue of other frail pajamaed men. He told this story with a detached, comic anger. He was saying, in effect, "This is what we come to." He was measuring his strength. On one of his better days, he set out on the same journey quite gallantly.

We had bought him some slippers. He was very troubled about the loss of his slippers and nail scissors, which had gone ahead of him, in the airplane he missed, to the home to which he never returned. My mother, who became obsessively angry about the taxi that had waited in vain for him to emerge from this airplane, was further enraged to receive someone else's suitcase in the event. "With a dirty shirt, and someone else's dirty comb and used razor," she said. My mother

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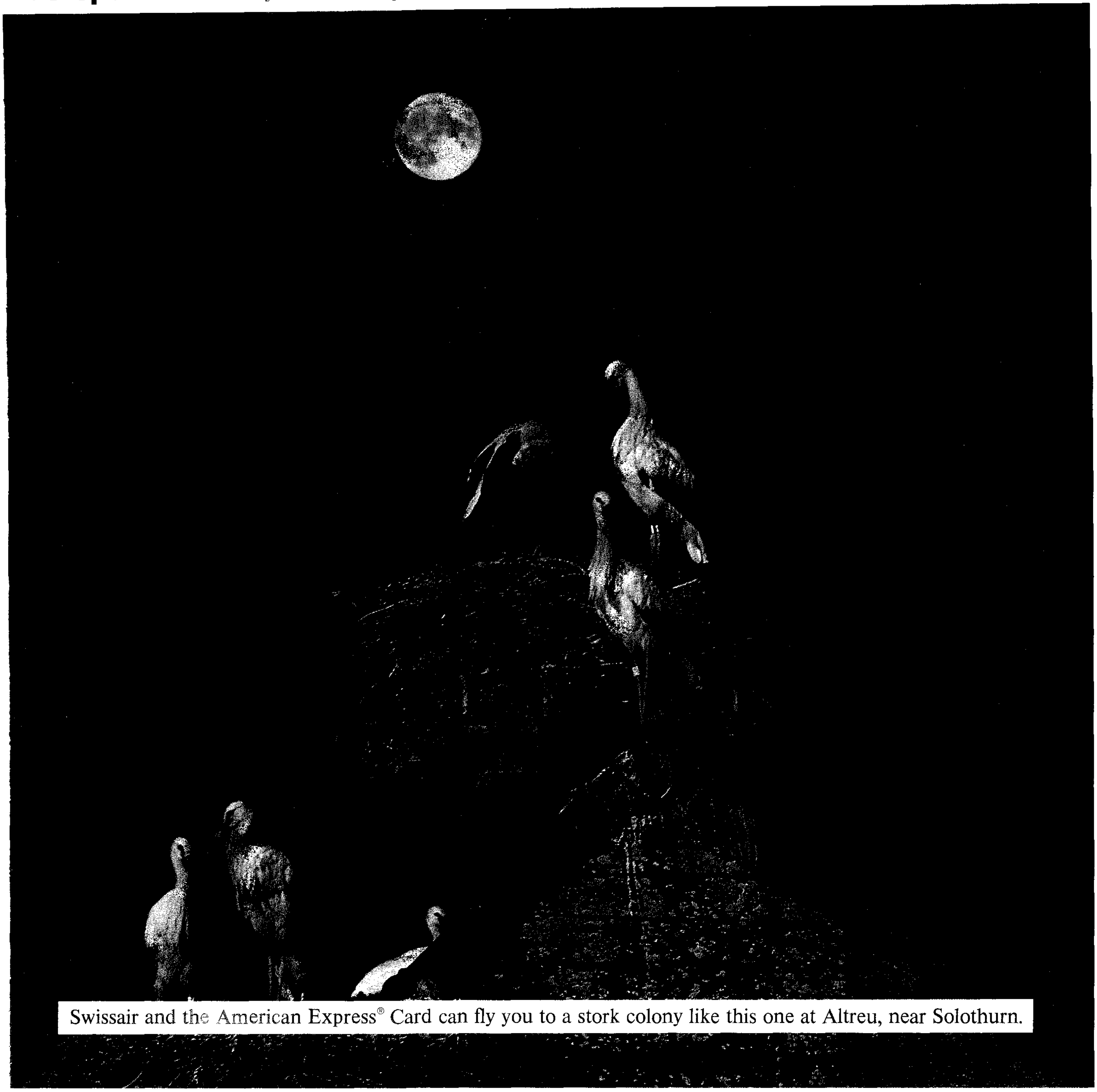

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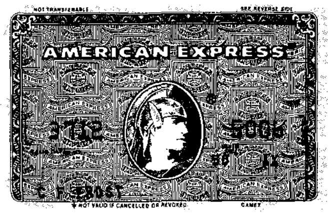

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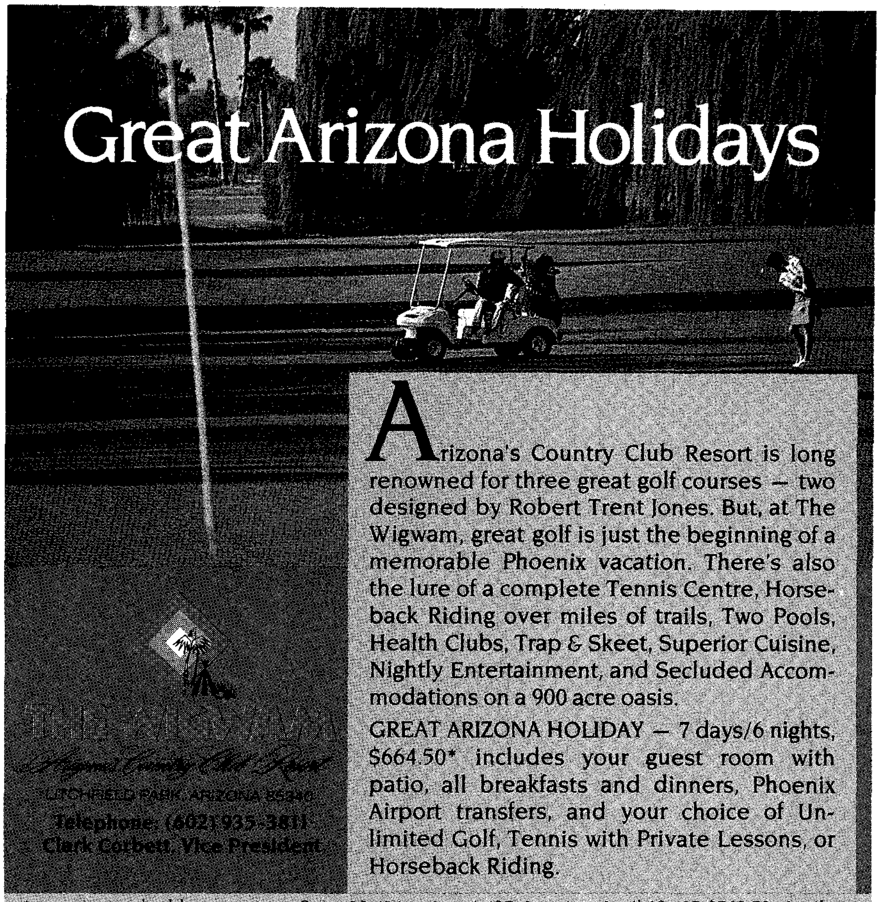
drew back from all human dirt and muddle. My father sat on the edge of his hospital bed scrupulously clipping his toenails. His ankle, between his pajamas and the new slippers, was white, and smooth, and somehow untouched, covered with young, unblemished skin. I looked at it and thought how alive it was.

In the mornings I walked along dark canals. I liked the city. I remembered that Camus had said that its concentric canals resembled the circles of Dante's Hell. I even bought a copy of "La Chute" to check the quotation, and carried it around with a paperback copy of van Gogh's "Letters," to read over my solitary lunches. Its hero calls himself a *juge-pénitent*. He recalls the wartime history of the city with ironic detachment. He pleads (in the legal sense). Amsterdam is, he says, "*au cœur des choses. Avez-vous remarqué que les canaux concentriques d'Amsterdam ressemblent aux cercles de l'enfer? L'enfer bourgeois, naturellement peuplé de mauvais rêves.*" Despite my reason for being in the city, I didn't find it hellish but rather reassuring in its persistent, sea-fretted solidity. The people were kind and reasonable. The university teachers had just then agreed to take cuts in salary and working hours in order to avoid layoffs. My father, who had not walked along the canals, or studied the brick housefronts, sat in his concrete-walled cell and worked out the social background of everyone he met—the doctor, the Humanist Society hospital visitor, the nurses, the other patients. Unlike Camus, he did not suppose that to be bourgeois was to incline toward Hell, bad dreams, and bad faith. But, a man of his generation, he found places on the social scale infinitely fascinating and important. The doctor owned seagoing yachts and an empty piece of Scotland where he fished salmon and shot grouse. My father, even in those weeks, was delighted by this discovery, by this contact with good breeding and success. He said to me of his own father, diagnostically and matter-of-factly, "I suppose we were lower-middle-class, really. That was what we were." He was being ruthlessly exact. He would have wished it otherwise. He talked to the doctor in his professional voice, from behind his professional's mask, more openly smiling than what I think of as his true self, the reflective, solitary face I watched as he thought out his past, and his future. If he would have to ask his Maker to forgive his virtues, he was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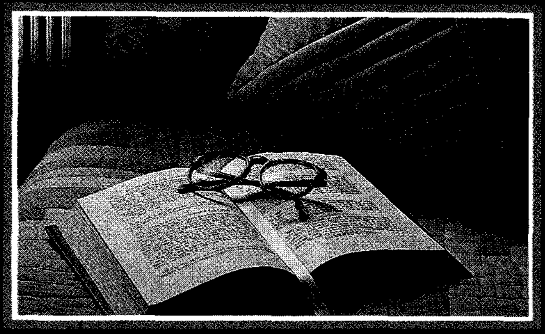

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sure that they were virtues, and that he had exercised them. When he came home from Amsterdam to the London hospital, there was a strike on, the surgeons wore smeared gowns, and the ancillary staff were brusque and sloppy. Amsterdam seemed a fitter place for him somehow. Its strangeness was in a way life-giving.

To me, too. I took pleasure, despite everything, in mastering its train system, in reading words in a new language, in making friends with the Humanist, who was distressed by the approaching death of a teen-age German heroin addict. I stumbled across the flower market, on the canal bank, where I bought him the dahlias. I sat in a restaurant in the Leidseplein and ate a huge bowl of mussels, with a glass of good white wine, in the October sunlight. The table was in a little glazed front parlor, half outdoors, half in, which reminded me of the covered porch in my grandfather's summer house on the Yorkshire coast, where I had spent a holiday bedridden with measles. The restaurant windows were finely etched with floral and geometric patterns. These, too, I associate with my grandfather. I see as I write that the etched drinking glass and carafe that stand by his bed in my vision of his death are those that stood in fact by *my* bed, on my only overnight visit to Blythe House. I remember that we inherited these objects at his death. My father was allergic to shellfish. He had collapsed in court in Naples in 1944 after eating lobster, and had developed huge hives on the bench in Hull, twelve years later, after a prawn cocktail. A police surgeon, examining him privily in a cell, had told him he must never eat shellfish again, and he never did, though he had taken intense pleasure in them. I did not feel bad about eating the mussels. There was too much else to feel bad about, and I would not have eaten them if he had been with me, I think. I did feel bad about the paintings. I experienced my one moment of desolation, during those weeks, in the middle of the Rijksmuseum, among all the darkly ingenious still-lifes, the heaps of dead books, memento mori, the weight of the varying sameness of past endeavor, the silence, my own inability to stop and feel curious.

The van Goghs were different. I could not like, I could not respond to, the very last paintings, the tortured and incompetent wheat field, with the black, despairing birds crowding over the paths that lead nowhere. But the

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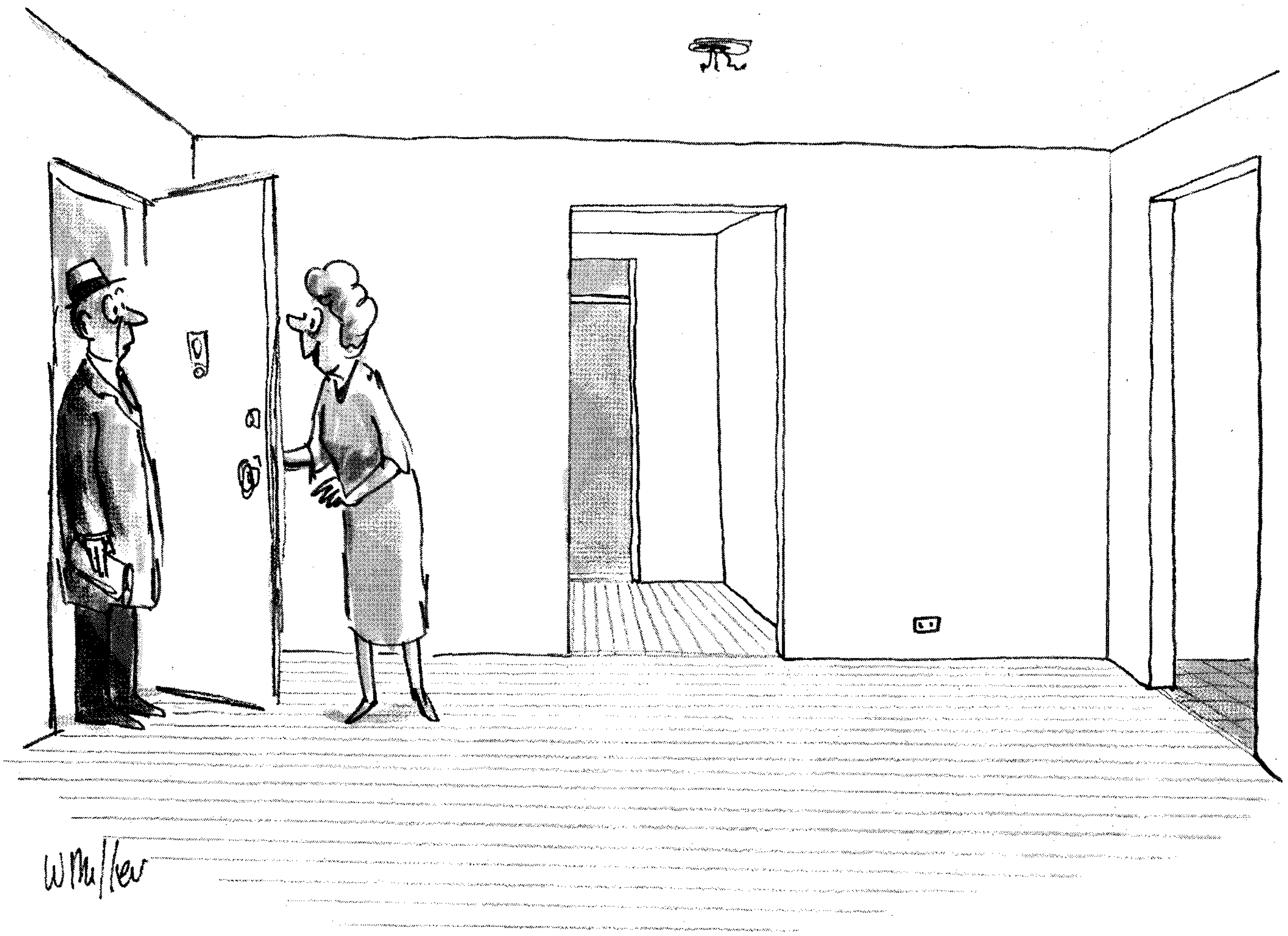

"A fantastic evangelist was on TV, and I sent him everything."

• •

great paintings of Arles and Saint-Rémy shone. The purple irises on gold. The perturbed bedroom. The solitary chair. The reaper, making his deathly way through white light in fields of shining grain. I knew what Vincent had said about this painting as the image of a cheerful death, a secular human image, of a man moving into the furnace of light. I stopped thoughts off. Then I thought of Vincent in front of Vincent's paintings. I brought my father postcards to see—contained, faded diminutions of all this glory—and he painfully addressed them to my mother, her sister, his oldest friend, in trembling writing, saying that he was all right. We have all inherited his handwriting, which was cramped and nondescript. My mother's was generous and flowing and distinguished. We were all trained differently yet we all write his small scrawl. How does that come about?

We talked about heredity during those long visits. He said my mother had come increasingly to resemble her mother, and that there was a lesson in that. We also talked about my mother's untruthfulness. My father felt it a failure in perfect good manners to complain about her narrative onslaughts on his own veracity. (This was complicated by a powerful fear they both had of failing memory, since accuracy meant so much to both of them, after all.) He said, not for the first time—anxious about the fact that it was not for the first time—that we had been over this ground: that she claimed to have been at his father's deathbed, where she had not been.

"I should know," he said. "He was my father. I was certainly there. How can I be wrong?"

It was then that I saw that much of my past might be her confection.

"Have you ever thought," I said, "how much of what we think we know is made out of her stories? One challenges the large errors, like that one. But there are all the other *little*, trivial myths that turn into memories."

He was struck by this, and produced an example, of how some flowers had died and my mother had supposed that perhaps the cleaning lady might have watered them too little, or perhaps too much—probably too much—and that that was why they had died, because Mrs. Haines had overwatered them, and so hypothesis became the stuff of fact.

Earlier that year, when it had been she who was ill, we had had a similar conversation, and I had told him, joking and serious, "It's all right for you. *You* didn't inherit those genes." Both of us, under stress, found this very funny; we laughed in complicity. Later he told his housekeeper, over coffee, that I was the image of his mother, that I resembled that family, strikingly. But I don't think this is true, and the photographs I've seen don't bear it out. Now in moments of fatigue I feel my mother's face setting like a mask in or on my own.

I have inherited much from her. I do make a profession out of fiction. I

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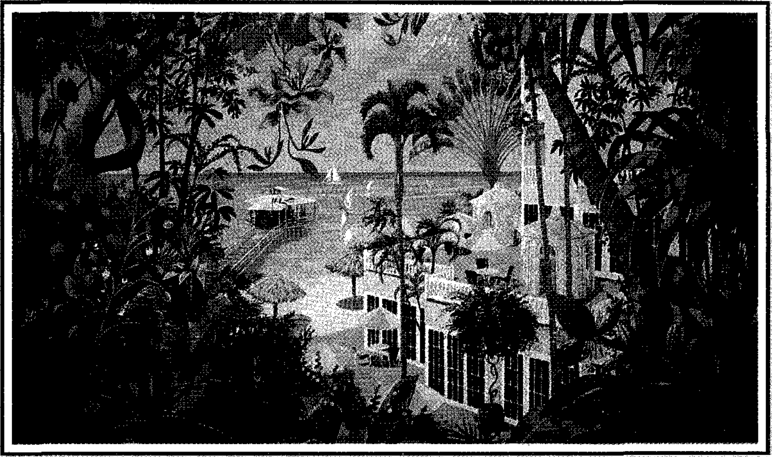

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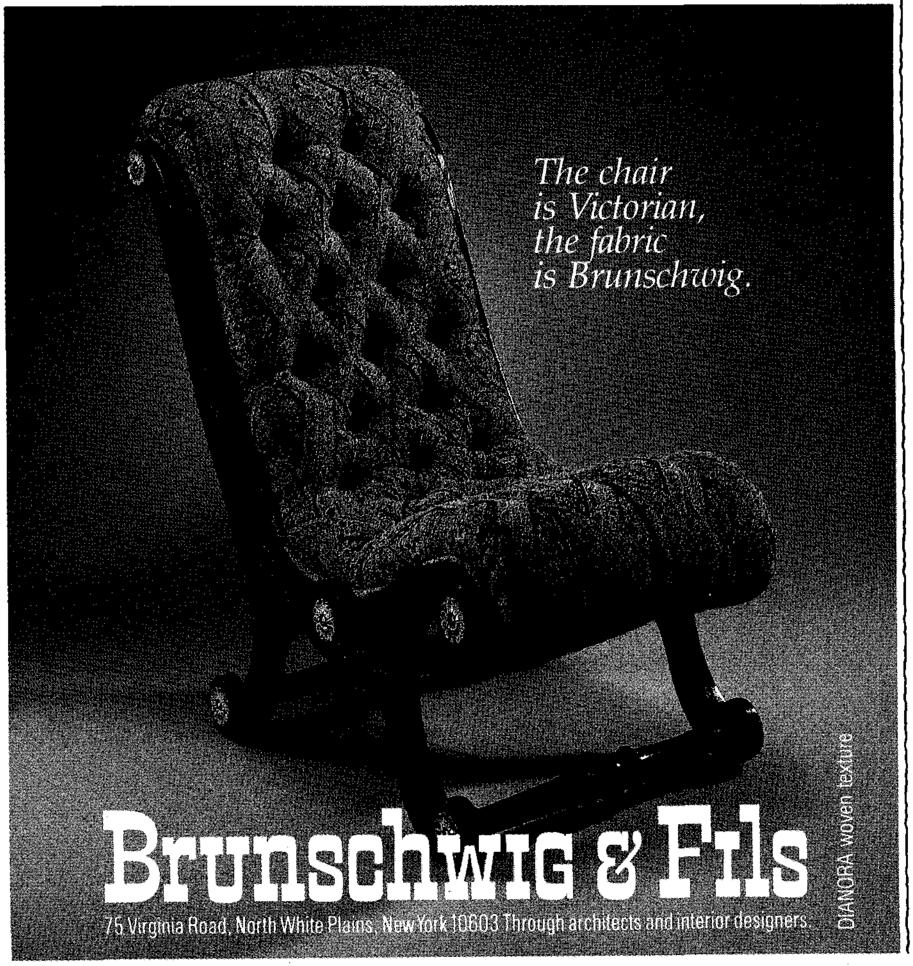

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select and confect. What is all this, all this story so far, but a careful selection of things that can be told, things that can be arranged in the light of day? Alongside this fabrication are the long black shadows of the things left unsaid, because I don't want to say them, or dare not, or do not remember, or misunderstood or forgot or never knew.

I left out, for instance, the tear gas. I wanted to write about Amsterdam as clean and reasonable and enduring, and so it was. But two of us came out of the airy space of the Van Gogh Museum into a cloud of drifting gas that burned our throats and scoured our lungs. There were black-armored police and stone-throwing evicted squatters. Behind our hospital-headed tram was a smoking column of burning cars. For several nights, we couldn't return to the hotel directly; it was cordoned by police, and the paving stones were torn up. My father could not begin to be interested in these manifestations. He was fighting his own private battle. To omit them is a minor sin, and easy to correct. But what of all the others? What is the truth? I do have a respect for truth.

I REMEMBER one particular day at Blythe House, when both of those grandparents were alive. Though it is not my only memory, I remember this day clearly, possibly because I wrote about it at the time. Now that I try to calculate how old I was, I see that I am already confused. It was during the war, during my father's Mediterranean absence, perhaps 1943 or 1944, certainly a very sunlit day during what I remember as a succession of burning, still summers, the beginning of my hunger for sunlight. I had stayed at Blythe House in winter; it had seemed stiff and frightening and huge, whether because I was then very little or because it was so much bigger than our wartime house I don't know. I remember an enormous cold bathroom, with a deep bath standing portentously in the middle of a huge empty space. I remember a view of dirty snow, a children's playground with slide and roundabout and swings on chains. I remember the cellar mouth and a dark, frowsty kitchen. I remember my mother's pervasive anxiety. But this summer visit was different. I noticed things. I was not wholly passive.

At the beginning and end of the visit, my grandparents stood formally side by side in front of the house, on a gravel drive, and I looked up at them. My grandmother wore a straight black dress, crêpey and square-necked. Her hair was iron-gray and caught up, I think, in a tight bun or roll. Her expression I remember as severe, judicious, unsmiling. Her stockings were thick and her shoes button-strapped and pointed. She was composed, I could say: she made no unnecessary movements, no conciliatory speeches, no attempt at affectionate embrace. (My other grandmother always rushed and enveloped us, smacking her lips.) My grandfather's face was obscured, because it was tilted slightly up and backward. He had a large, protuberant belly, across which was looped a gold watch chain. I remember his belly most. He was not a fat man, or a large man, but substantial. I thought—or if not then, I have since regularly thought, so that the ideas are bonded to this memory—both of Mr. Brocklehurst, the tall, black pillar of "Jane Eyre," and of Mr. Murdstone, in "David Copperfield." I did not expect my grandfather to do anything frightening or condemnatory, though I was afraid of committing a faux pas. He was identifiably a Victorian patriarch, that is all. Though in those days I had no idea of historical distance and supposed we were all threatened with Newgate prison for debt, and with Fagin's night in the condemned cell. I could tell, I think, that my grandfather was not very interested in me, and that he had nothing to say to me. But in some way I cannot now remember matters developed so that he escorted us to the sweetworks itself, to see the boiling of the sugar. On this journey we were accompanied by a tall man in a brown overall, with a lugubrious, respectful, and friendly face, and by some other forgotten man, who lingers in my memory only as the owner of a cloth cap.

The works was gaunt and bare. The floor I remember as mere earth, though it cannot have been; it was certainly dark, not tiled, and dusty. It was all like an enormous version of the outdoor washhouses of the north, drafty and cold and echoing. On the left as we went in were large vessels I associated with the copper pots my other grandmother boiled sheets in, stirring them with a huge wooden baton. I saw, or I remember, four of these. One was full of sulfurous yellow boiling sugar, one of a dark cherry-red, one of bright green, and one, which amazed me because it was an unusual color for sugar, of a kind of

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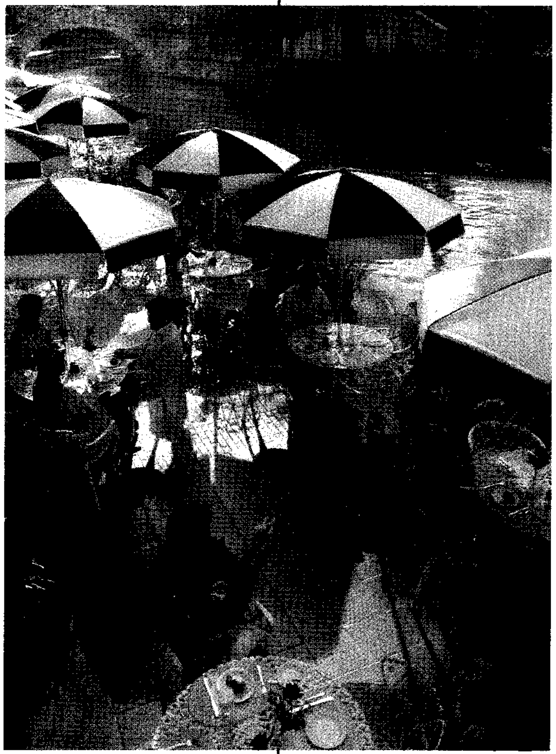

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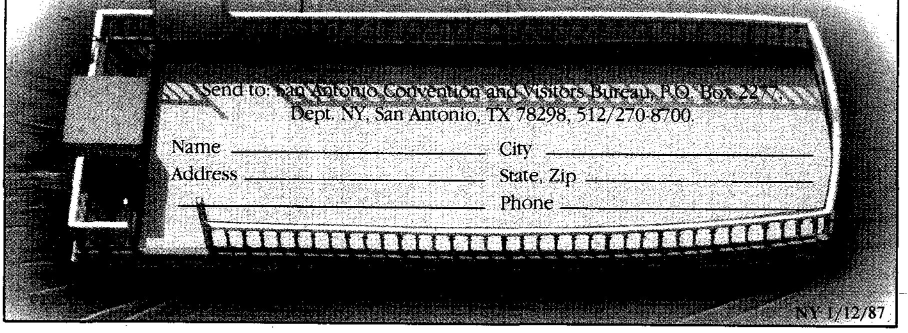

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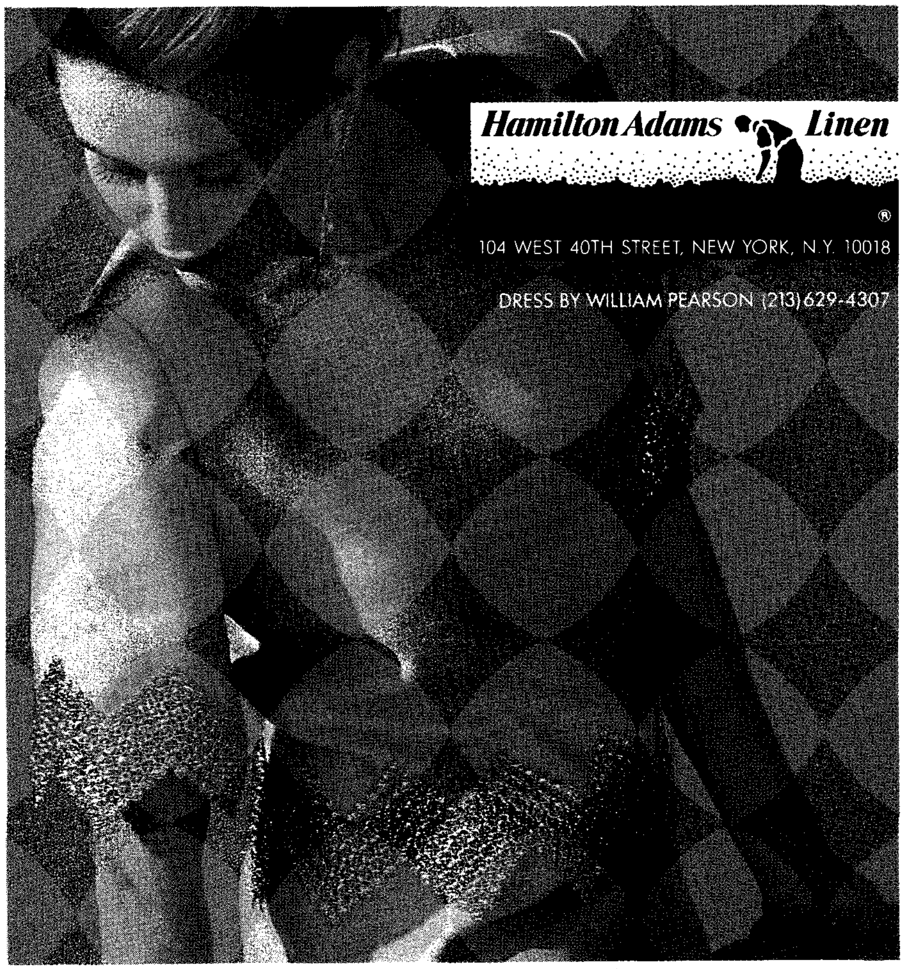
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pale inky color, a molten sea of heaving, viscous blue glass. The colors and the surfaces were brilliant and enchanted. *They undulated, they burst* in thick, plopping bubbles, they swirled with curving streamers of trapped air like slivers of glass. There was a smell—not cloying but clear and appetizing—of browning sugar. We moved on and saw large bucketfuls of this gleaming fluid poured onto a huge metal table, or belt, that ran the length of the room. Smoking, it hissed down and began to harden. Men with paddles manipulated and spread it, ever finer, more translucent, wider, like rolled pastry magnified numberless times, the colors paling so that magenta became clear peony-pink, so that indigo became dark sky-blue, so that topaz became straw-gold. And a kind of primitive mechanical tart-cutter descended and stamped these gleaming sheets, making rows of domed disks. The process had things in common with glassblowing, which then I had not seen, but which later, in Venice, in Biot, reminds me always of the urgent work with the hot sugar before it cooled. Strips for humbugs—the hard candies like striped satiny pillows—ran not flat but in a long coiling serpent, thick as a man's trunk at one end, tapering to thumb size, through an orifice that simultaneously gave it a half twist and bit it off.

The most miraculous moment was when my grandfather urged the man in the brown overall to show me how the stripes were made in humbugs. Now I have it—now, almost, I hear my grandfather's voice: it was both hesitant and eager, and wholly absorbed in its subject. I cannot remember the words, but I can remember his certainty that I would find this process, his work, as startling and satisfactory and amazing as he did himself. This is all I know about him at first hand—that his work fascinated and absorbed him. The humbug stripes were as extraordinary as he had promised. The humbug sugar lay hot and soft in a huge mass at one end of the table. The overalled man pulled off an armful of it, which he rolled roughly into that fat serpent coil, a heavy skein, like my mother's knitting wool, on his two arms. We went out of the shed into a yard where a large hook protruded from the wall—very high up, it seemed to me, so that he had to reach up to it. But I was a very small child for my age; maybe it was not so high. The man hung the fat tube of brown sugar—dark, treacle-brown sugar—over this hook, and began to whip it around and around. I knew this motion; it was the regular turn of the playground skipping rope—twist and slap, twist and slap. And as I watched, the sugar lightened. From treacle to coffee, from coffee to a milky fawn, from fawn to a barley-sugar straw color, and from there through the gelatine color of old dried egg white to pure white, no longer translucent but streaked and streaked with infinitely fine needles of air. "It's the air that does it," my grandfather said. "Nothing but whipping in air. There's no difference between the two stripes in a humbug but air: the sugar's exactly the same." I remember him saying "It's the air that does it." We took the white rope back into the factory and laid it on a dark one, and the two were wound round and round each other, spiralling and decreasing in girth, by skilled slapping hands, until the tapered point could be inserted into the snapping machine. I remember the noise it made, moving on the metal: a kind of crunching and crackling of dried sugar, and a thump and slap of the main body of it, this last noise a magnified version of Plasticine rolling at school.

When it was over, my grandfather fetched several conical paper bags, and these were filled with the fragile slivers of sugar that fell away from the stamping machine. Those, too, I still remember. At first, they were light and powdery and crystalline, palest of colors—rose, lemon, hyacinth, apple. Hot they tasted delectable, melting like sweet snowflakes in those days of sugar rationing. If rationed out and kept too long, they settled, coagulated, and became a rocky mass—undifferentiated, paper-smeared, sweating drops of saccharine moisture.

I wrote about this, at East Hardwick School during the Pontefract days. It is the first piece of writing I remember clearly as mine, the first time I remember choosing words, fixing something. I remember, still, two phrases I chose. Both were from my reading. One was from a description of birds on a Christmas tree, in some Victorian tale for children: the birds were German, delicate, and made of very fine "spun glass." The phrase had always delighted me, with its contradiction between the flexible and the brittle thread produced. I remember I used it for the fragments in our conical paper bags. I remember also casting about for a way of telling how violent, how powerful were the colors in the

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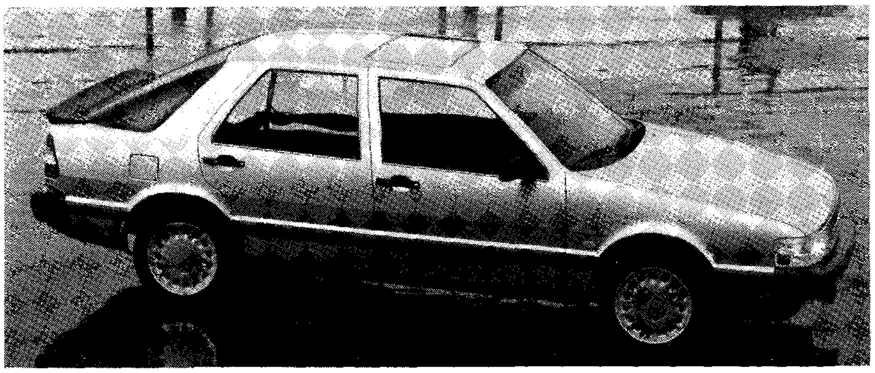

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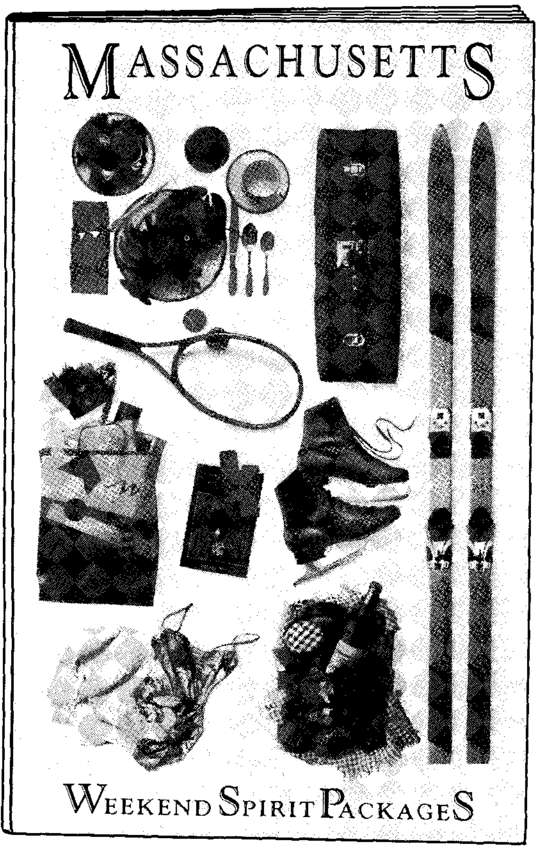

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sugar vats. I wrote that the green was "emerald," and I know where I found that word—in the reading endlessly supplied by my mother:

> And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
> As green as emerald.

As green as emerald. Did I go on to other jewels? I don't remember. But I do remember that I took the pleasure in writing my account of the boiling sugar that I usually took only in reading. Words were there to be used.

Later in that visit, my grandfather encouraged me to pick his flowers. He had a conservatory, on one side of the gray house, with a mature vine, and huge bunches—I remember many huge bunches—of black grapes hanging from the roof and the twisting stems. He gathered one cluster of these, and encouraged us to taste and eat. "More," he said, when we took a tentative couple of fruit. "They are there to be eaten." Grapes were unknown in those dark days. I remember dissecting mine: the different pleasures of the greenish flesh inside the purple bloom of the skin, the subtle taste, the surprise of the texture and the way the juice ran. I was taken out and told to pick flowers. Dubiously I took a few daisies from the lawn. "No, no," he said. "Anything, anything at all. You help yourself and make a really nice bunch." He liked giving—that, too, I am sure of, from my own experience. I made a Victorian nosegay. Everything went right; it formed itself, circles of white around circles of blue, circles of rose, a few black-eyed Susans. And a palisade of leaves to hold its tight circular form together. I ran up and down, selecting, rejecting, rich. My mother described the early age at which I had distinguished the names "phlox," "antirrhinum," "lupine." I don't remember her much that day; she must have been at ease. Or else I was. It was unusual for either of us to be at all settled, at all confident, at all happy. It was almost like my father's idea of his family life as Eden, though then I didn't know of that, knew only that these grandparents were to be regarded with awe. I don't think I saw them again. We did not go there often, and after a time my grandmother died, and then my grandfather, who could not, my mother said, live without her. "He was like a lost child. He was quite helpless, all the life gone out of him."

MY mother outlived my father only a little more than a year. She did not appear to grieve for him, going only so far as to remark that she missed having him around to agree with her about Mrs. Thatcher's treatment of the miners. She was curiously despondent about the prospect of dying herself under a government for which she felt pure, instinctive loathing. Immediately after the war, she had once told me that when it began she had thought through, imagined through, all the possible worst things that could happen, to England, to my father. "Then I put it behind me and simply didn't think of it anymore," she said. "I had faced it." As a little girl, I found this exemplary and admirable: action is possible if you stop off feeling. Some chill I had learned from my mother worked in Amsterdam when I stopped off the dangerous thoughts possible in the presence of van Gogh's dying cornfields or his dark painting of his dead father's Bible. I could talk to my father about his father only by not loving him too much—not exactly at that moment—by not thinking too precisely about his living ankle, by cutting him off. My poor mother maybe—in part—cut him off too efficiently, too early, faced it all too absolutely and too soon. I have been told recently that during the war the R.A.F. wrote to her relatives begging them to influence her to desist from writing despairing letters to her husband in North Africa. Wives were asked to keep cheerful, to tell good news, not to distress the men. She faced his loss—I believe her—and then complained of her lot. Some time after he died, she said, bewildered and uncertain, "I had got used to it already, you see. I had got used to him not being there, all the time he was in Amsterdam." She was explaining her apparent lack of feeling.

The day of his funeral was bitterly cold. It was just before Christmas. He was cremated, but it was a Quaker service, attended mostly by non-Quakers, who did not break the tense silence. I felt nothing, I felt fear of feeling, I felt the rush of time. Outside, my mother was pinched and tiny and stumbling.

I said, "I remember the day he came back from the war."

"Yes," she said, very small and vague.

He came back at midnight, or so my mother always said. He had announced his return in a telegram that never arrived, so she had no idea. She went furiously to the door and burst out, "It's too bad," thinking he was the air-raid warden complaining about

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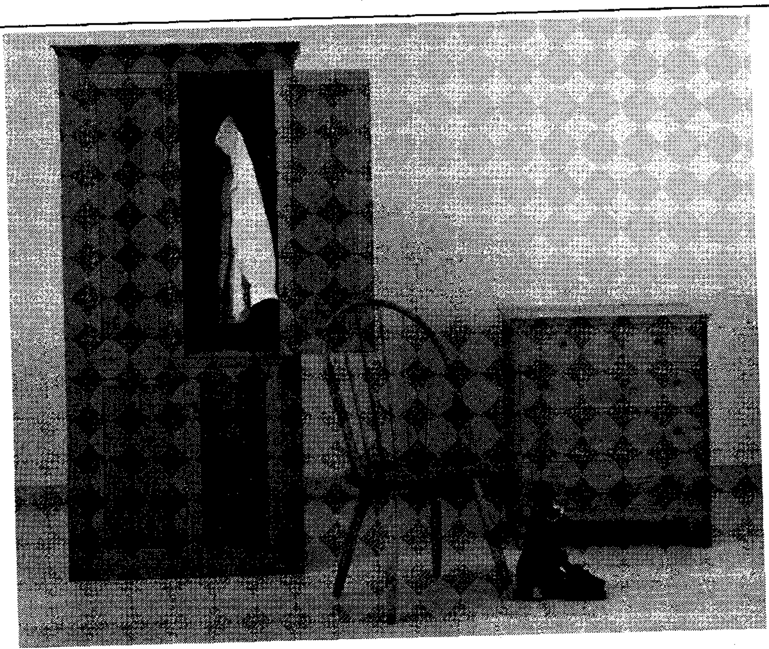

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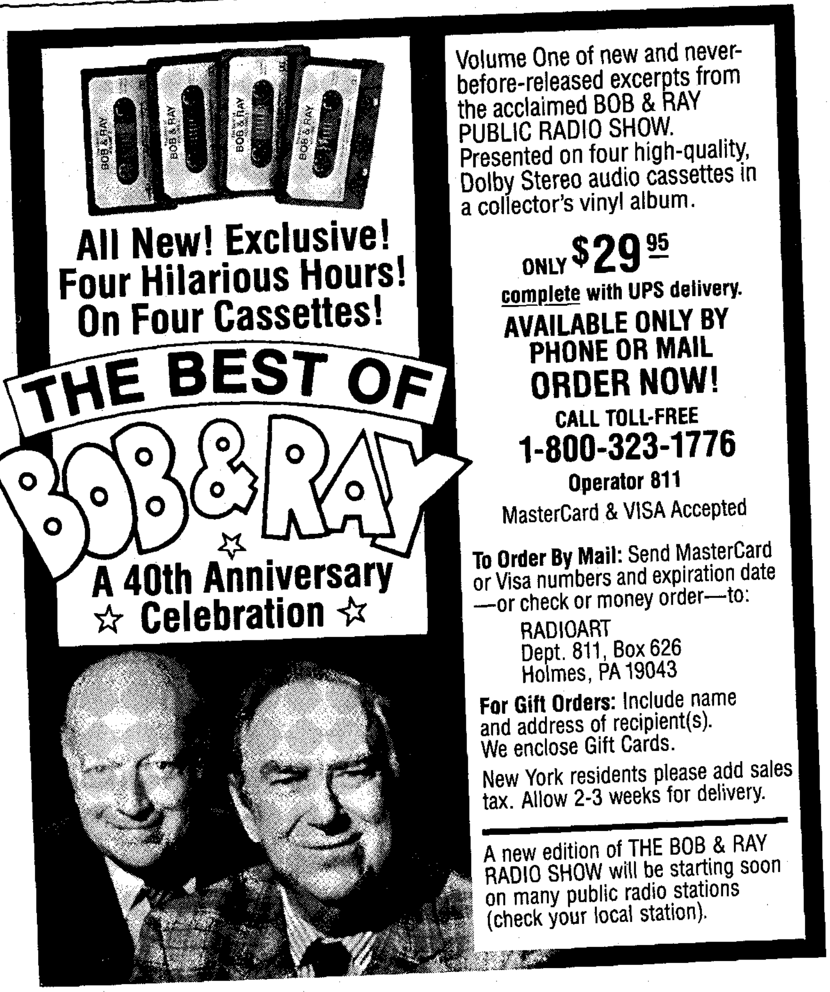

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chinks in the blackout. What did they say to each other? I remember being woken—how much later? I remember the light being put on—a raw, dim ceiling light, not reaching the gloomy corners. I remember the figure in the doorway, the uniform, the red hair, a smile as surprised and huge and half afraid as I imagine my own was. I remember him holding his officer's hat. Why hadn't he put it down? Or am I wrong? I remember even an overcoat, but I hopelessly confuse the memory of his return with his parting. The hair was less red, more gold than I'd remembered. He owned a hairy, ruddy-ginger Harris-tweed jacket, which my mother had always said exactly matched his hair, and which I still think of as "matching" it, though I saw differently and remember better. (And how to be sure, with all the years of fading between then and that last cold day?) I sat up, scrambled to my feet, and leaped an enormous leap, over my bed, over the gap, over the bed with my small sleeping sister. I don't remember the trajectory of this leap. I remember its beginning but not its end, not my safe arrival. I do remember—this is surely memory, and no accretion—a terror of happiness. I was afraid to feel. This event was a storied event, already lived over and over, in imagination and hope, in the invented future. The real thing, the true moment, is as inaccessible as any point along that frantic leap. More things come back as I write: the gold-winged buttons on his jacket, forgotten between then and now. None of these words, none of these things recall him. The gold-winged, fire-haired figure in the doorway is and was myth, though he did come back, he was there, at that time, and I did make that leap. After things have happened, when we have taken a breath and a look, we begin to know what they are and were, we begin to tell them to ourselves. Fast, fast these things took and take their place beside other markers—the tea-pot, the horse trough, real apples and plums, a white ankle, the coal bucket, two dolls in cellophane, a gas oven, a black-and-white dog, gold-winged buttons, the melded and twisting hanks of brown-and-white sugar.

—ANTONIA BYATT

•

The five members of the Concord String Quartet believe in finishing things they start, even if it takes a few years.—*Barbara Delatiner in the Times.*

And an extra hand.

Belgium the Key to Europe

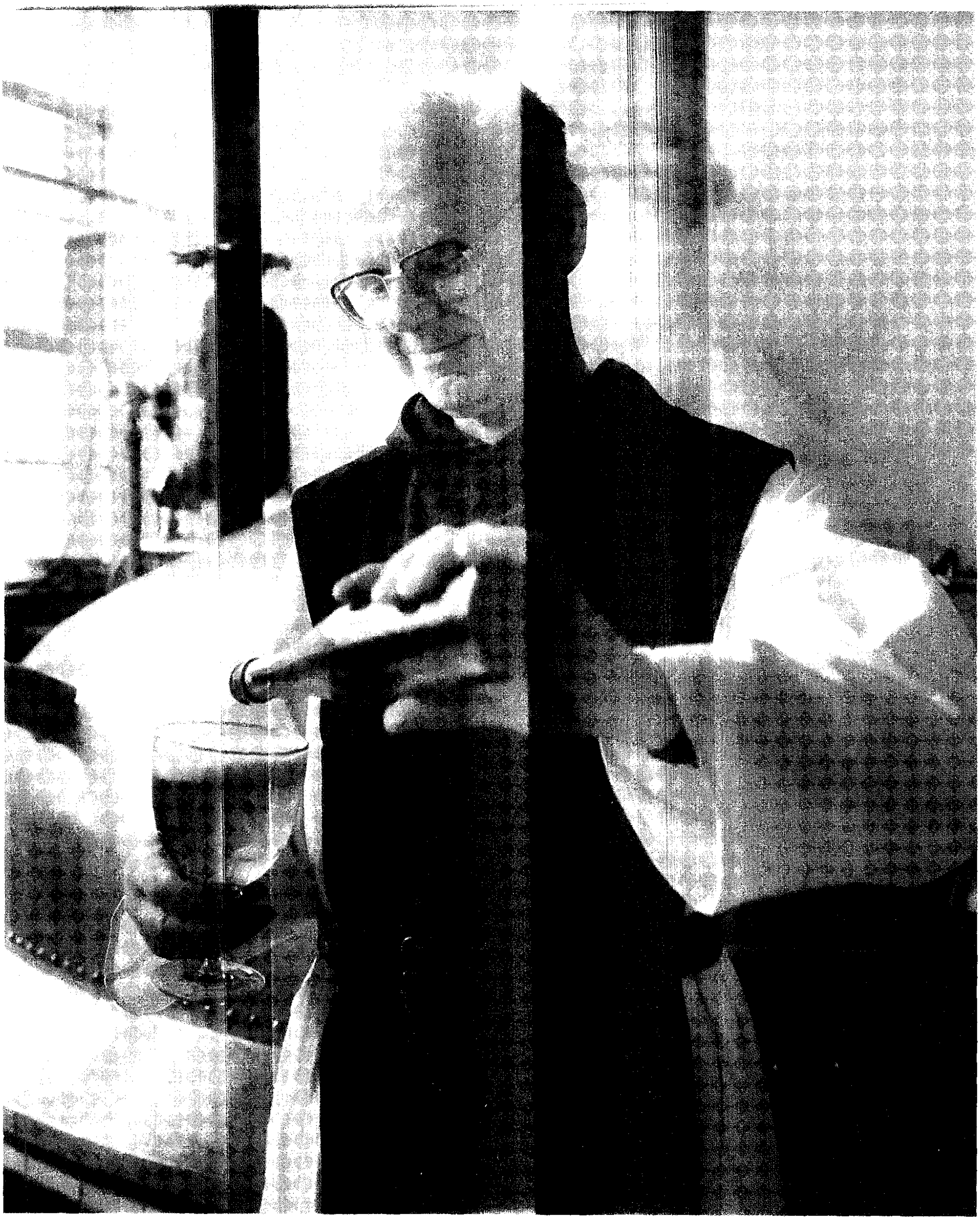
CLAUDE LEVE

It's a funny thing about Belgium. It's a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't kind of place. Just a little mysterious. There it is, big as life, right smack in the middle of Europe, and yet it keeps getting overlooked.

The Belgians have only themselves to blame. They're the ones who started this idea of their country as a crossroads — a place on the way to someplace else. It *is*, of course, as any map will show you. But it's not only a stopover, it's a destination in its own right.

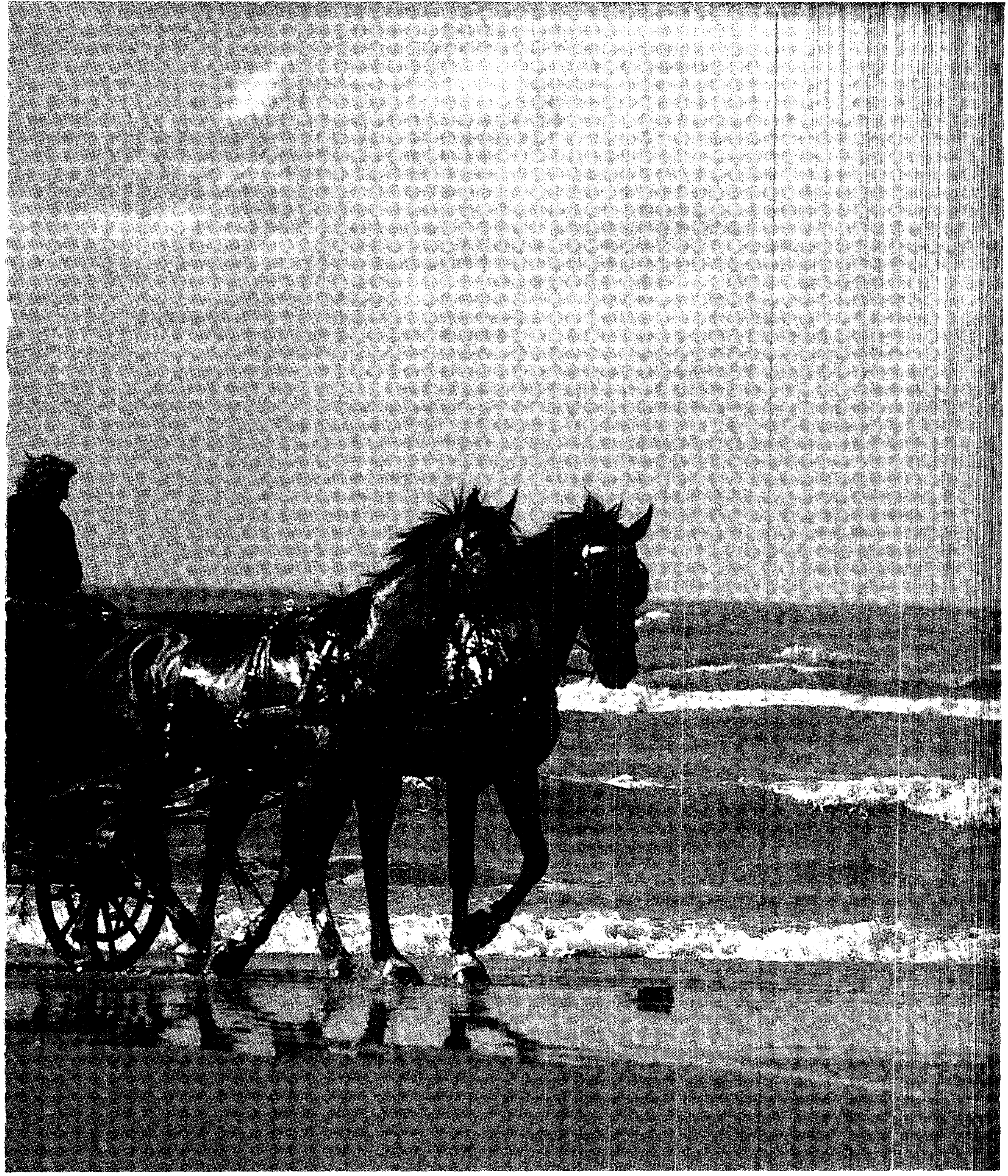
Busy tourists, understandably, suffer from the It-Must-Be-Tuesday Syndrome. A happy few know better, and they aren't as few as they used to be either. They spend the night and discover the wonders of a Wednesday they'd never imagined.

They discover that Brussels is not *only* the medieval splendor of the Grand'Place. It is the sinuous Art Nouveau buildings of Victor Horta, the architect who captured daylight and, for the first time, poured it into the dim interiors of private homes, changing the way people conceived of family life, no longer a refuge from reality,



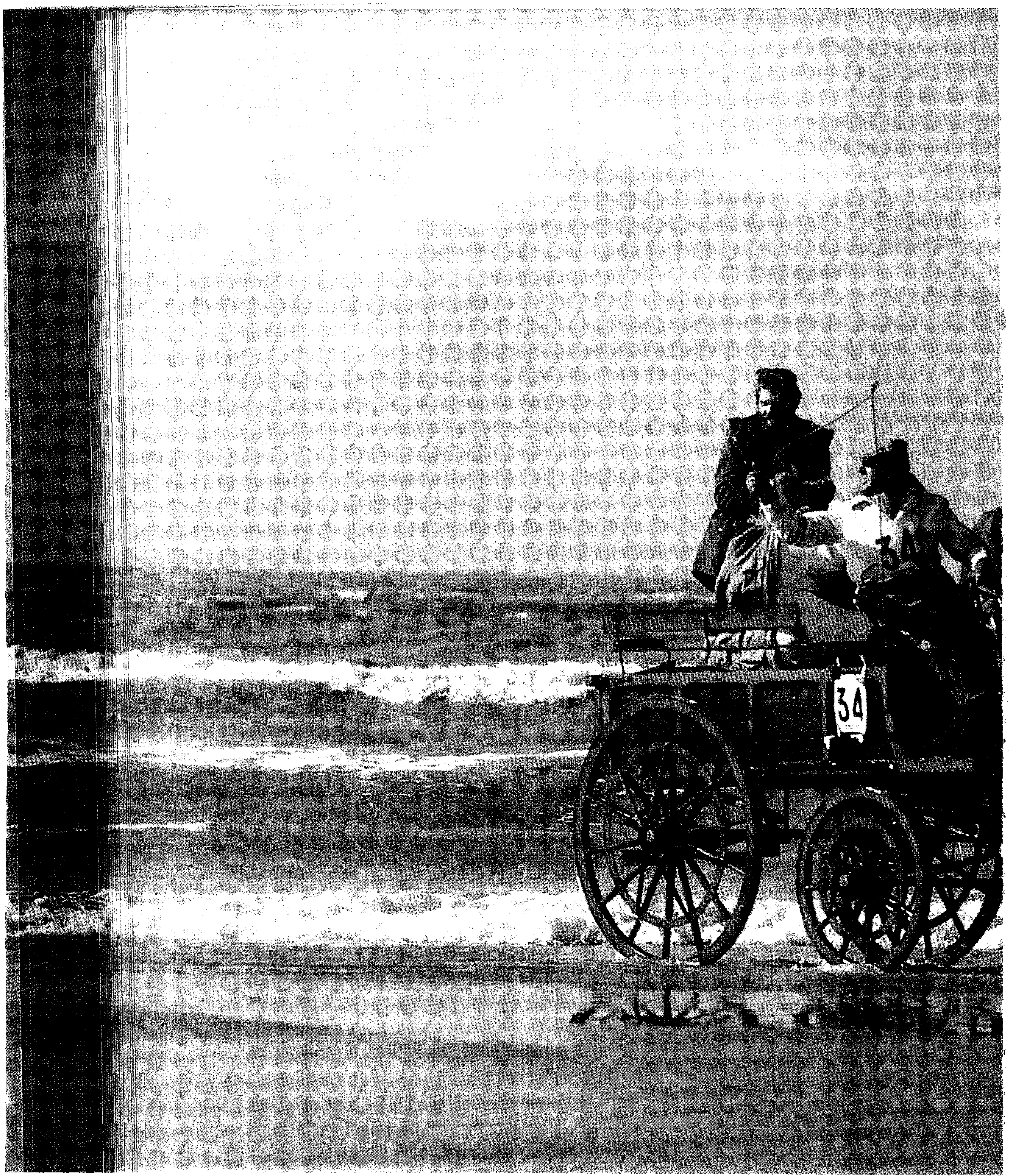
DIRK BUWALDA

A Wednesday kind of Belgium



Belgians are nothing if not individual and various. They speak Dutch in Flanders, French in Wallonia, both in Brussels. No one need apologize, as a visitor recently did, for "not speaking Belgian." Neither do they. But they do speak English.

Any guidebook will tell you all you need to know about Belgium's native sons — from Ambiorix, the heroic opponent of Caesar, and Godfrey of Bouillon, leader of the First Crusade, to Emperor Charles V, and Bruegel, Rubens, Ensor and Magritte. But you won't discover the fun of morning markets, the mists over the forest paths in the Ardennes or the now-fierce, now-serene moods of the great blue-grey North Sea unless you stay long enough to do this intriguing Kingdom justice.



J.J. SOMMERIJNS

but a daily c[illegible] [illegible]ises.

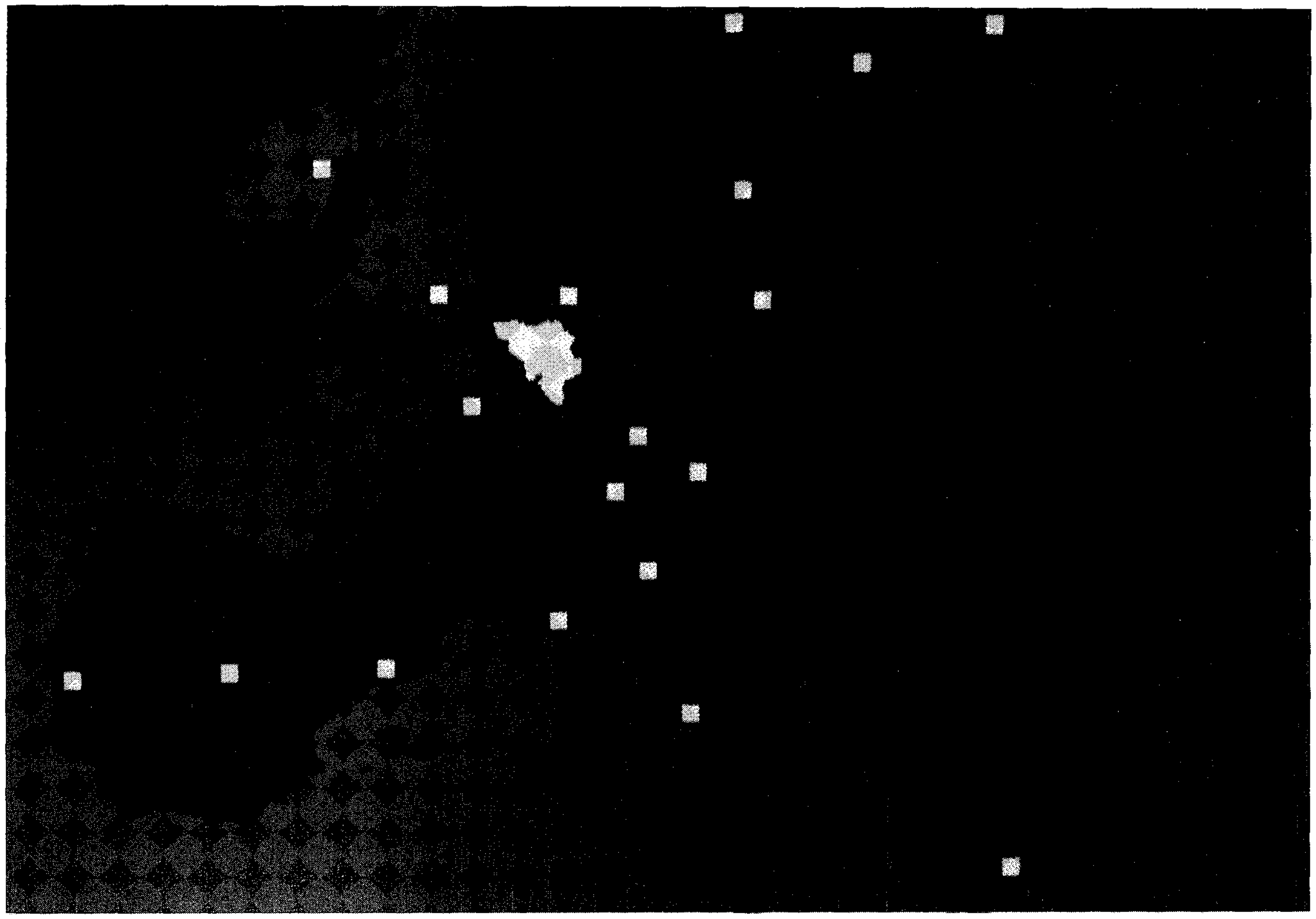
Horta [illegible] things count. Every Belgian feeling for [illegible] of the ordinary. The shape of a doorknob, th[illegible] letter slot, or a vertical radiator that doubles a[illegible]. Everything had to be special and different.

Which [illegible] to explain the elusiveness of Belgium. A country can't have a clear image unless its people conform to it. Belgians don't conform.

No street has any two houses alike, every façade has its distinctive variations.

Our Wednesday adventurers will discover, too, that Brussels is not Belgium, any more than New York is America, Paris is France or Beijing is China. Belgium is Bruges and Antwerp and Ghent, Liège and Tournai and Dinant.

And again, each of them does it own thing, carrying on its own sometimes solemn, sometimes crazy traditions. A procession of cowled monks in Bruges, a flinging of stuffed cats from a belfry in Ypres.



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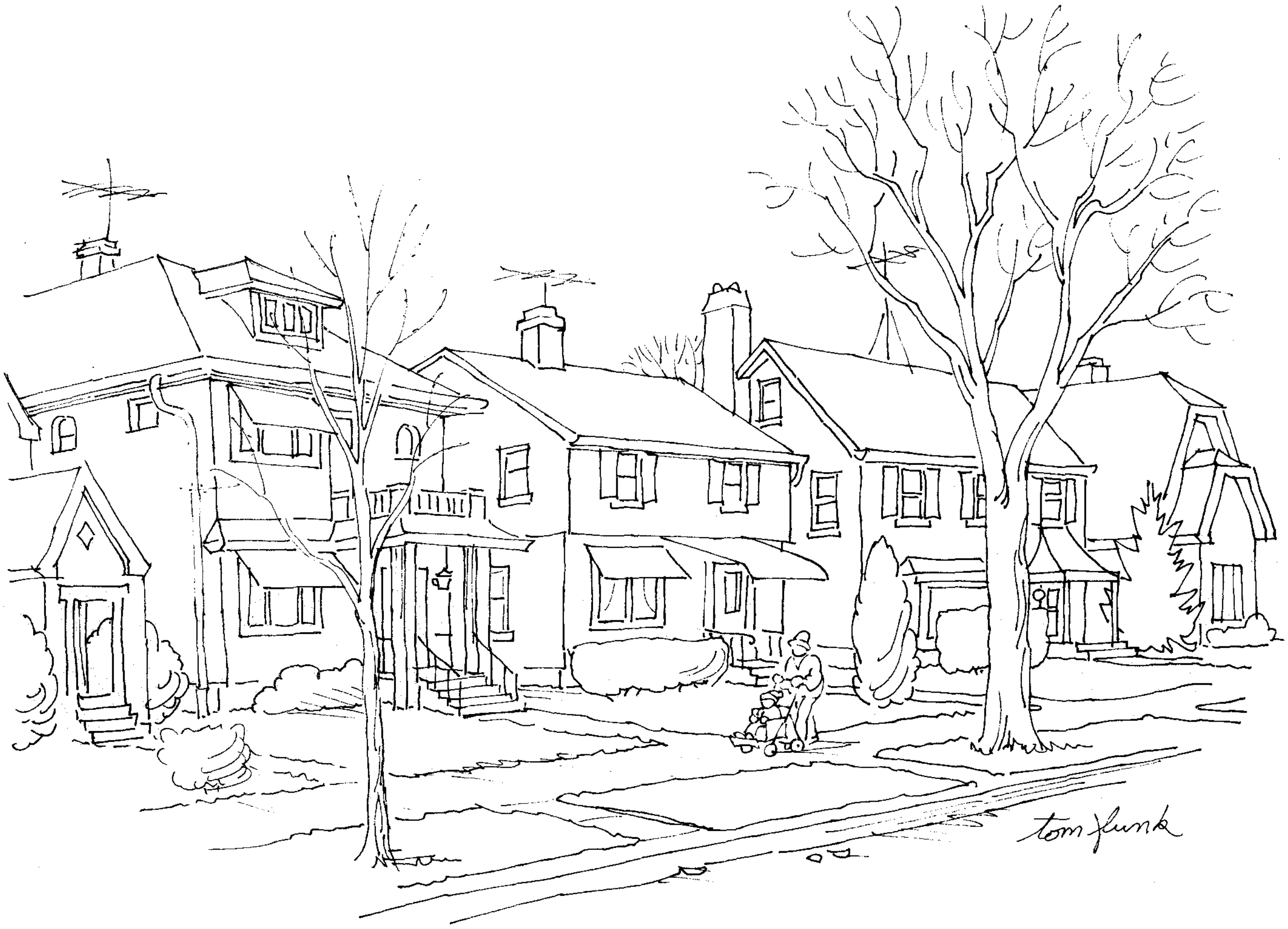
A REPORTER AT LARGE

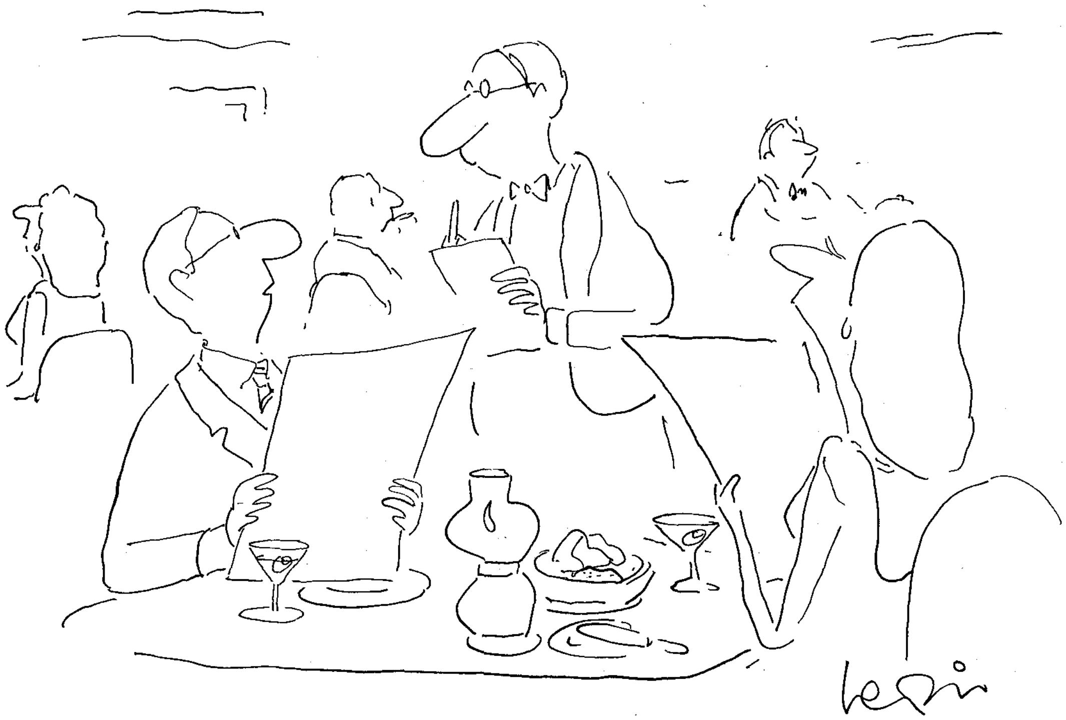
HISTORY IN SHERMAN PARK—II



ON September 10, 1984, former Vice-President Walter Mondale, the Democratic Presidential candidate, unveiled a plan to gradually reduce the federal budget deficit which called for moderating the growth of military spending, reduced social spending, and increased taxes. President Reagan sought to balance the budget with reductions in social spending alone while increasing military spending and lowering taxes. By taking the unpopular position that taxes should be raised, Mondale hoped to win credit for courage and honesty and to throw a spotlight on what he saw as the impossibility of Reagan's plan. Reagan simply ignored Mondale's challenge, and accused him of being a traditional Democrat, who wanted to raise everyone's taxes in order to spend more money. The only day on Mondale's calendar, Reagan said, was April 15th. The press and television gave the Mondale plan wide coverage, and it seemed that Reagan might feel compelled to respond in detail. On September 11th, however, Reagan announced that at the end of the month the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, would meet with him to discuss nuclear-arms negotiations, among other things. It would be Reagan's first meeting with any high-ranking Soviet official. Politically, the announcement was a double coup. It diverted the main spotlight of the news media's attention from the Mondale budget plan to the Gromyko visit, and at the same time it undercut one of the most serious charges that Mondale had been levelling against Reagan—that he was the only President in the nuclear age who had failed to achieve arms-control agreements with the Soviet Union.

In early October, I paid another visit to William and Gina Gapolinsky, who live in a two-story house in the Sherman Park neighborhood, on Milwaukee's north side. (Their names and certain other names and details have been changed.) I had been talking to them about the Presidential election, and about whom they planned to vote for and why. Gina had sat Bill down on a kitchen chair in the middle of the living room and was about to give him a haircut. He had a cold, and his eyes looked bleary. He had been spending especially long hours at work, he said—he had recently become district sales manager for a company I'm calling the Standard American Cookie Company—and had encountered his first disciplinary problem in his new job: a salesman who was not bringing in enough business, and, furthermore, was not properly servicing his accounts. "The guy is a real dink," Bill said. "He has an extremely poor work ethic. I know—I worked with him as a salesman."

I asked Gina and Bill what they thought of the Mondale plan for cutting the deficit, but they were not aware of it. They didn't get much chance to watch the evening news, Bill explained, because he was often still at work, and Gina was giving the children their supper and putting them to bed. They subscribed to the Milwaukee *Journal*, a newspaper with a national reputation for excellence, but



"What would you suggest as a dinner strategy?"

did not find as much time as they would like to read it. Their only other subscription was to *Milwaukee Magazine*, which dealt with local stories and rarely covered national politics. Once, when he was in college, Bill said, he had had a subscription to *U.S. News & World Report*, and had found its articles admirably "short and to the point." Later, he had tried *Newsweek* but had found its articles too long and detailed. A great deal of their political information, Gina explained, came from watching the major political events on television, such as the Conventions and the debates. Bill, in particular, was looking forward to the debates between Reagan and Mondale—two in all, the first to be on October 7th. "I wish there could be six of them," he said. "I'm leaning toward Reagan, but if Mondale gives me a good reason I could change my mind." Bill took pride in his willingness to give a hearing to views opposed to his. When Gina, who planned to vote for Mondale, disagreed with him, he would sometimes say, "That's a good point." This open-mindedness appeared to be associated with the affable, good-natured side of Bill, which many of his relatives attested to. It was also associated with the Democratic beliefs with which he had been surrounded in his early years, for it was to these views that he now, as a self-described conservative, had to open, or reopen, his mind. His Republican beliefs, on the other hand, seemed to appeal to the mischievous, rivalrous side of his nature, as Gina had suggested to me. In the world in which he had grown up, to be Democratic was orthodox, and to be Republican was to be iconoclastic—independent-minded, not bound by received ideas. His belief that his conservative views were made necessary by an ineradicable harshness, even corruption, in the affairs of the world was also in keeping with his mischievous streak, and it was not without a certain pleasure that he debunked Gina's gentler vision of American life and its political possibilities.

I asked Bill if he remembered any events that had lured him away from the Democrats and toward the Republicans. Two stood out in his mind, he said. One was an article in a newspaper he had read in college which pointed out that surveys had discovered that a large majority of the college graduates in the United States voted Republican. "This might not reflect well on me," he said with cool self-appraisal as Gina snipped at his sideburns, "but when I saw the results of the poll I felt a kind of pride. You know how the Republicans are viewed as really being kind of snobbish? Well, all my life I'd lived in a working-class neighborhood, and I'd come from a working-class family. When I saw that most college-educated people are Republican, it made me feel like 'I guess I'm part of that—like I'm a little more educated, a little better than the rest, like I'm a little above all those working-class high-school graduates.' And I think that maybe in this way I let myself fall into a snobbish way of looking at things." The other event was his difficulty in finding a job after graduating from college. One of the landscaping companies he had worked for had been owned by two brothers of a very conservative bent. They pointed out to him that even though he was a college graduate he took whatever job was available, no matter how humble—raking leaves, delivering newspapers—in order to put food on the table for his new family. The people on welfare could do the same, the brothers said, and Bill could not help agreeing.

AS I got to know the Gapolinskys and their neighbors, I was struck by the inclusive spirit of the social gatherings on their block. The block had a life to which everyone apparently belonged almost by right: to be a neighbor, it seemed, was enough to get one invited to the rounds of visits and parties. Yet in a neighborhood as close as this one there were bound to be social distinctions, and these had their political implications. The term "Yuppie"—usually interpreted as a rough acronym for "young urban professional"—had both a stated and an implied "up" in it, yet that upward path appeared to be forked. One path up—up to more money, and to everything that money could command—was, certainly, the corporate ladder, which both Bill and his close friend and neighbor, Paul Toruncyk, somewhat to their surprise, found themselves climbing. It was clearly a Republican direction. When you took the first steps up it, no one jokingly asked you if you had now taken out your membership in the *Democratic* Party. (When Bill became sales manager, one of his company's veteran salesmen

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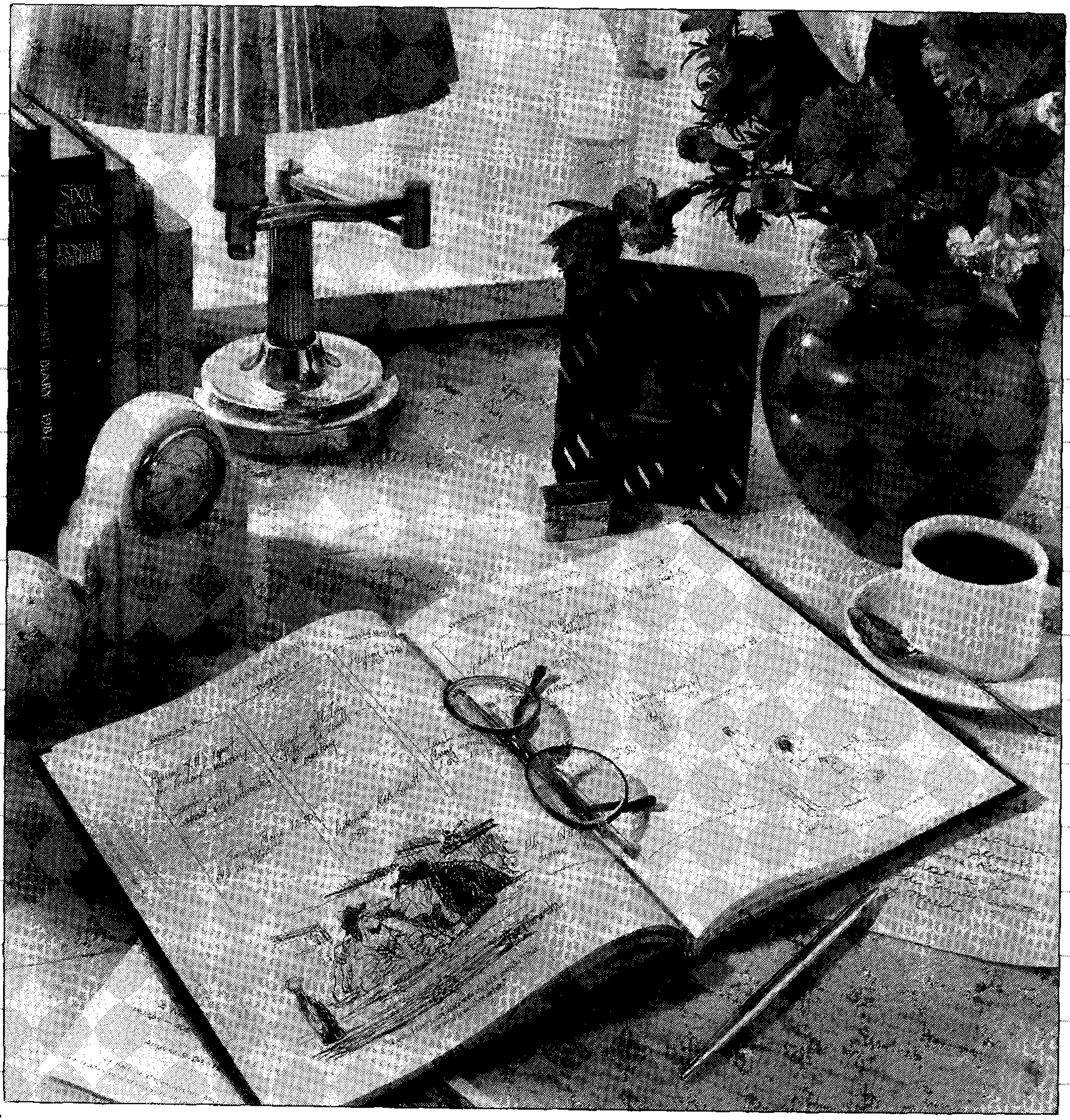

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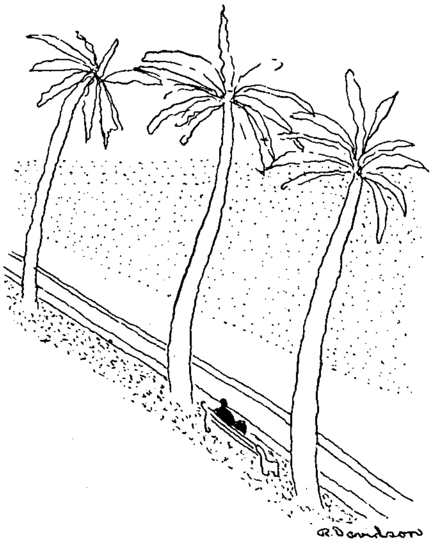
87N28

asked him if he'd got his Republican Party membership card yet.) Nor did Paul, a former Catholic-seminary student who now worked for an oil company owned by his father-in-law, suddenly find that his egalitarian, liberal ideas *gained* in appeal. (On the contrary, he found them thrown much into doubt.) Another upward path, however—one that had strong appeal for Gina—was the path leading to higher and higher "cultural rank," and one vehicle for propelling oneself to those heights, certainly, was education. Yet education was not the only vehicle. There was something enticing about Paul and Betty Toruncyk's life that was less easily identifiable—something about the brick and stone façade of their house, about their tweedy clothes, about the fact that Paul's brother was a book editor in Boston, about the melancholy look in Paul's eyes. This other upward path, which Paul, indulging his "humanistic" ideals, had followed until he changed his job, seemed to lead to what Gina called the "really interesting" people, who would never describe one dinner they had eaten while eating another, and to opportunities to refine and broaden one's knowledge and tastes. It might lead, too, to opportunities to lift oneself beyond purely material pleasures and devote oneself to society's unfortunates. (Curiously, self-denial could be a luxury.) And this path, in Gina's mind—and also, apparently, in Paul's—was a Democratic one. Taking the route of corporate promotion, on the other hand, might well mean associating with some of the "superficial" people—even in "the tower" itself, as Standard American's corporate headquarters, in Houston, was known. Best of all, perhaps, would be a career leading upward in both directions at the same time, but such a career was hard to find, as Paul had discovered when he felt forced for financial reasons to quit his job as a counsellor of addicts and take the oil-company job. He had switched from one of these paths to the other, and one apparent result was a wholesale reconsideration of his political views. He had the wrong views for his new life, it seemed, and was in the throes of attempting to find the right ones.

"MY gosh, we're so up to here in church activities that we can hardly find the time to do anything else," Elizabeth Skoretsky told me, in a pleasant, low-pitched voice, when I went to visit her and her husband, Fred, in the orderly, immaculate living room of their house, up the block from the Gapolinskys. A grandfather clock, its ticking audible in the quiet of the room, which was heavily carpeted, stood by the front window. It had been assembled from a kit by Fred, who makes and finishes furniture; and other pieces that he had worked on were placed about the house. Both Fred and Elizabeth were registered occupational therapists, who taught handicapped, convalescent, or otherwise incapacitated people basic skills, such as dressing and eating. Fred now worked for a local hospital; Elizabeth had quit a similar job in June of 1982, shortly before the birth of her first child. They now had two children, Bob, aged two, and Mary, aged six months. The Skoretskys were devoutly Catholic, and were active in Catholic political causes. On the bumper of their car was a sticker reading "Ban the Bomb, Not the Baby." Elizabeth was on the board of directors of the Pregnancy Aftermath Helpline—a group founded by Feminists for Life of Wisconsin to give counsel to women who had lost babies, whether through abortion, placing them for adoption, or miscarriage. In January, Elizabeth had helped to present the recent bishops' pastoral letter "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response" in an adult-education program; the letter states that "we are the first generation since Genesis with the power to threaten the created order," and finds that "we live today, therefore, in the midst of a cosmic drama," in which we are called on to "continually say 'no' to the idea of nuclear war." She had worked, too, to bring to Milwaukee a national program called Children of War, which was sponsoring visits to American schools by teen-agers from countries experiencing war in one form or another. A contingent of Children of War was visiting the Skoretskys' parish that fall. I asked them about their jobs, and Elizabeth, who had long, brown hair and a fair, rosy complexion, told me that hers had been exhausting and frustrating but had been marked by "peaks" of satisfaction, one of which occurred when a teen-ager who had been diagnosed as autistic when she was a child and still avoided touching anyone or being touched by anyone walked up to her mother and hugged her. Elizabeth had felt a certain pressure from friends to continue in her career, but had resisted it. "Some women seem to be trying to prove something by staying in their careers the whole time," she said. "I thought, To heck with it. To *whom* am I trying to prove something? I'm not going to jump through hoops held out by others. This is *my* life." Fred, a wiry young man with a small face, who was wearing wire-rimmed glasses, listened quietly.



I asked whether Fred's salary alone was enough for them to live on.

"It works—because we *make* it work," he said. When President Reagan proposed heavy cuts in social programs early in his first term and Congress passed many of them, Elizabeth went on to tell me, the program that employed her had to adopt stricter guidelines, and Elizabeth had written a long letter of protest to the Administration. This year, however, she planned, she told me, to vote for the President's reëlection. I asked why.

"The most important thing is the abortion issue," she said. "The pro-abortion people seem to think that there should be some kind of test for getting into life. They think you have no right to be born *if* you're going to be poor—that's a kind of means test—or *if* you might have some congenital illness, or merely *if* the mother finds that for you to live is inconvenient for her at the moment. I reject that thinking. I believe that there should be no conditions placed on entering life. For me, human life is sacred, period."

"It's an emotional issue for me, too," Fred added. "I think the attitude now is 'Hey, if you've got a problem, get rid of it.' Instead of taking responsibility for your actions. Everybody talks about freedom, but with freedom comes responsibility."

I asked her what her feelings were about the other item on their bumper sticker—the "Ban the Bomb" half.

"I've thought about that for a long, long time," she said. "When I was a freshman at college, one of my friends said that she could not bring children into the world, because of the danger of nuclear war. And I really had to think hard to justify to myself bringing another person into the world under these conditions. When I was pregnant, I had dreams in which I heard the bomb was on the way. After my daughter, Mary, was born, I had a dream where I was putting on her snowsuit—trying to protect her, because a nuclear war was coming. Of course, I know that a snowsuit isn't going to protect anybody against nuclear war. But in the dream that was my idea, and I remember thinking with horror that I had nothing to put on over her eyes. You know, you can put a scarf over a kid's mouth and nose, but what about the eyes? I've talked with friends about starting Mothers Against the Bomb, or something like that. When you're pregnant, you feel responsibility and love for this child. You feel, 'Don't touch a hair on its head'—let alone incinerate it, or, worse, leave it half dead to suffer. When the bishops' pastoral letter came out, it made me think over a lot of things. How much solidarity do I feel with the children of Central America, I wondered. Do I really feel that we all belong to one human family? If I knew that the United States was going to be wiped out, would I want the Soviet Union wiped out in revenge?"

"How in the end did you justify having children?" I asked.

"My main thought was that I am a practicing Catholic, and I really believe that God is present in our lives and in our world. To me, He is real. He is *really alive.* I decided that it would be the supreme act of faithlessness to despair. We have it in our power to make the bombs, and we have it in our power to choose life without them."

"How have these thoughts and feelings affected your thinking about the current election?" I asked.

"It's hard to say," she answered. "Mondale isn't very clear about it. His running mate Ferraro talks against nuclear arms, but I think she voted for arms appropriations. But I am disturbed that Reagan hasn't achieved any arms control. Now he's saying we can negotiate. I just hope he's thinking about all this."

I asked her how she had voted in past elections.

"For Gerald Ford in '76 and for Reagan in '80. My family tended to vote Republican. I was born in Elmhurst, Illinois—my father is an electrical engineer—and the whole neighborhood was heavily Republican."

I asked Fred to tell me something about his upbringing, and he said he was born in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, into a working-class family; he had four brothers and one sister. His father worked as a maintenance man in a factory that manufactured cooling units, and his brothers now held blue-collar jobs—two were factory machinists; one, laid off from a factory that made hydraulic seating, tended bar; and one was a fireman—and his sister worked part time as a loan officer at a credit union. Fred, who attended the University of Wisconsin, where he met Elizabeth, was the only one of the six to graduate from college. After college, he entered on his career as an occupational therapist. He said that perhaps because of his working-class background—but also because of his strong opposition to the Vietnam War—his early political thinking assumed an anti-establishment, and even a so-

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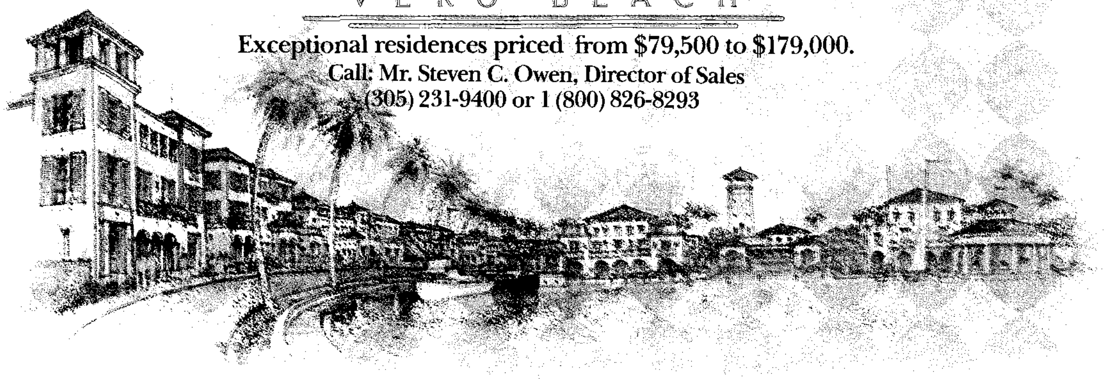

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cialist, bent. In 1968, while he was still a high-school student, he supported the Democratic-primary campaign of Senator Eugene McCarthy. In 1972, he voted for Senator George McGovern. In 1976, he voted for Peter Camejo, the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party. And in 1980 he voted for Barry Commoner, the candidate of the Citizens Party. I asked whom he favored this year.

"I'm going to vote for Reagan," he said. He spoke slowly and unemphatically, in a reedy voice.

"How did you make the transition from Peter Camejo, a left-wing revolutionary, to Ronald Reagan, a right-wing Republican?" I asked.

"I don't think my basic philosophy has really changed," he said. "I've always voted on the issues that were most important to me. I believe in nonviolence, in helping other people, in the common good, in socialism."

"Do you see President Reagan as a champion of these beliefs?" I asked.

"Well, I have a lot of ideology that is coincident with the socialists', but it's not *total.* For example, most socialists are for abortion, and I'm against it. For me, it's a civil-rights question. The unborn are the most helpless group in society. Having grown up in a family of factory workers, I relate to how people feel downtrodden and oppressed, how they get to feel like mere tools of production. I believe in the value of human life. I still have the same principles, but I guess I apply them a little differently. Maybe I'm strange."

"What about economic issues?" I asked.

"*On those, there has been a* change," he admitted. "I now think that supply-side economics is valid—*to some degree.*" Fred raised a cautionary forefinger to underscore the importance of this qualification. "Also, I agree with Reagan on some foreign-policy issues. I agreed with the invasion of Grenada. I think they really went in there and cleaned out the situation. I don't think we should impose democracy, but I also don't think we should let the Communists gain power. I don't know. Reagan leaves a lot to be desired. But he's done a pretty good job."

In early October, the Milwaukee *Journal* ran a series of articles on the baby-boom generation, by Nina Bernstein. The results of a survey of Milwaukee-area residents taken by the

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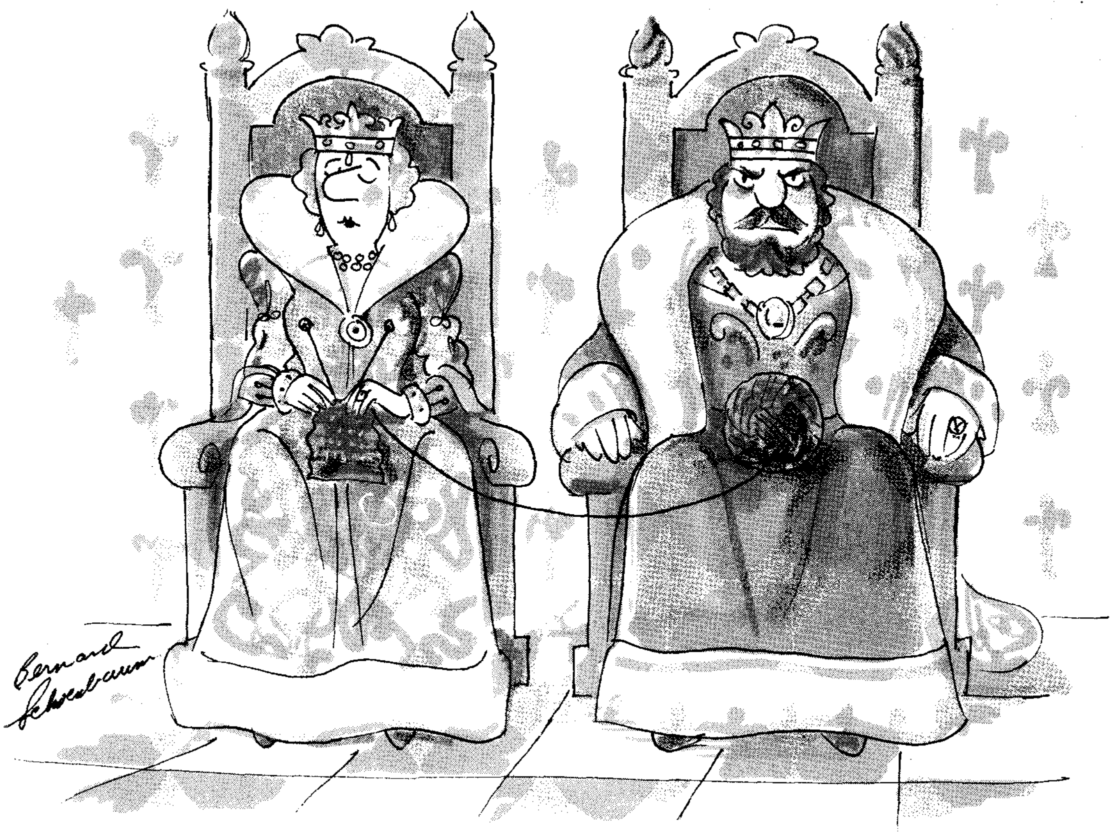
FATHER SEBASTIAN KNEIPP (1821-1897)



Journal, one of the articles reported, showed that in sexual matters the baby-boom generation, defined as people from twenty-three to thirty-eight years old, was much more permissive than people over thirty-eight. For example, sixty-one per cent of the younger group "approved" of "casual sex," whereas only twenty-eight per cent of the older group did; and seventy-seven per cent of the younger group approved of unmarried people living together, whereas only thirty-nine per cent of the older group did. The younger group, however, was more inclined to "support the U.S. going to war" in a variety of circumstances. For example, sixty-four per cent of the younger group would support the United States in a war to "stop the spread of Communism," whereas only fifty-five per cent of the older group would; and sixty per cent of the younger group would support the United States in a war to "protect our economic interests," whereas only fifty-five per cent of their elders would. In the first installment in the series, part of which was devoted to politics, Nina Bernstein reported on an interview with a man named John Carlton, who had campaigned door to door for Senator McGovern as a college student, and now worked for a firm that "devises tax-sheltered pensions for wealthy doctors." Carlton found himself "confused and regretful," Bernstein reported. Although, owing to "biases" he had "picked up" from his job, he believed that "Reagan is good for business," he nevertheless felt "cheated." Alluding to the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy, he told Bernstein, "I feel like my life would have been different if certain people hadn't died. Sometimes I'm in real conflict with myself on what I really feel. I'm still basically a liberal, and I believe in the civil-rights movement and the anti-war movement and the anti-nuclear movement. Maybe if all the people who feel the way I do stood up and said, 'O.K., that's enough of this nonsense,' someone would listen." Meanwhile, he planned to vote for Reagan.

IT was "tired old liberalism," and tired liberals, too—or so things appeared in Sherman Park. Like so many political usages, the word "liberal" is not so much a definable concept or a political philosophy as a linguistic bin into which various elements, some of them more or less incompatible, have been thrown in different times and circumstances. The same could be said of the word "conservative." What makes these terms hard, ultimately, to avoid using (much as one might like to) is, perhaps, that even if the notions contained in them are not linked conceptually they are linked historically, forming a clump whose fortunes rise and fall more or less as a unit in the public mind. In its dominant sense in 1984, the clump represented by the word "liberal" might be said to include, among other things, the following political views and inclinations: skepticism regarding the use of force to bring about political results in other countries; anxiety about the possibility of nuclear war; support for government programs designed to relieve poverty and bring about racial equality; concern for the state of the environment; and mistrust of legal or other government intervention in private, or supposedly private, matters, including, above all, sexual matters. It would no doubt be possible through careful study to give a history of this meaning of the term: to describe how the skepticism regarding military intervention stemmed from the Vietnam War; how the mistrust of government intervention in private matters was tied to the loosening of sexual and other restrictions in society in the nineteen-sixties; how the belief in social programs to help the poor and redress social wrongs originated in the New Deal and was strengthened in the civil-rights movement; how all these views coalesced in a rebellion against the status quo within the Democratic Party which culminated in the Presidential campaign of George McGovern in 1972; how McGovern's opponent Richard Nixon gave the word a heavily pejorative twist and then, by winning in a landslide, burdened the word with the odium of political defeat, an association from which it had never recovered; how in the late nineteen-seventies and the early nineteen-eighties the "permissive" social content of the term was separated from its political content, so that a majority of young people found themselves simultaneously approving of casual sex and of a hawkish foreign policy, as the *Journal* survey revealed—a combination bound to surprise observers accustomed to the political patterns that had taken shape in the nineteen-sixties. But, whatever the exact sense, or content, of the word "liberal," and whatever its history, being a liberal in Sherman Park—where liberalism by any definition had a strong tradition—was hard going in 1984. Paul Toruncyk, Thomas Donegan (the alderman who represented Sherman Park in the city government), his assistant, Terry Perry, Fred Skoretsky, and John Carlton found it an effort to maintain liberal convictions, as if in the invisible recesses where opinions take shape and convictions receive their nourishment a current had reversed direction, so to be liberal was now to swim upstream rather than down. Only Gina Gapolinsky seemed untroubled in her liberal convictions. She was the only serene liberal I had met in Sherman Park.

Bill Gapolinsky, Paul Toruncyk, Tom Donegan, and others had an explanation for the waning fortunes of liberalism: economics. To Donegan, that meant that the formerly young had discovered who paid taxes. To Bill, it meant that he had discovered the ruthless ways of the "real" world, and made an adjustment. To Paul, it meant that he and the country were going through the same process of tightening their belts in the face of economic necessity. Of course, every generation passes from the stage in which it is taken care of by its parents to the stage in which it must make its own living, and the process has usually been a sobering one. For the nineteen-sixties generation, however, the requirement of making a living, and all the obligations and worries that went with it, seemed to have come as a particularly startling development, as if it had never occurred to the young people then that they would have to find a job and pay bills. Their economic innocence may help explain how in the late nineteen-seventies and the eighties careerism and money itself—immemorial facts of human life—suddenly seemed to be "discovered," and even to become fashionable, as if no one had ever heard of them before. For a time, it became almost original to want to be rich. The very existence of the word "Yuppie"—another of the political terms that are both maddeningly vague and hard to avoid altogether—points to the origins of the phenomenon it seeks to describe. In the United States, there have always been young professionals, and most of them have lived in cities. Only in the nineteen-eighties did this come to be considered worthy enough of note to deserve a sobriquet. (That this has occurred is perhaps all the more striking in view of the fact that the supposed characteristics of Yuppies—their interest in their careers, their interest in buying things, their jogging—are anything but flamboyantly attention-getting. It seems more surprising that these phenomena should be noticed than that they should occur.) The lineage of the term is revealed by the "ppie" ending, and proceeds, surely, from "hippie" to "yippie," and from "yippie" to "Yuppie." Had there not once been hippies, who dropped out of established institutions and tried to live outside them, and yippies, who protested against the activities of established institutions, it seems unlikely that anyone would have noticed the existence of Yuppies, who are notable mainly because they do neither—to everyone's apparent surprise. In other words, a Yuppie is someone who has decided against being a hippie or a yippie. The almost purely negative meaning of the term is underscored by its pejorative overtones, which include implications of shallowness, materialism, greed, political apathy, and lack of imagination. Hippies and yippies were not generally popular when they existed, but they have attained an implied, retrospective popularity in the negative implications of the word "Yuppie." Many people point to others as Yuppies; few claim the title for themselves. The fact that the Yuppie is considered a prime political phenomenon—a class large enough to be given attention by vote-seekers—suggests a further negative significance of the word. If the Yuppie is not a hippie or a yippie, neither is he a blue-collar worker. To judge by the campaign of 1984, the political fortunes of blue-collar workers—so avidly courted even in very recent times in American politics—had sunk drastically. Their only appearance as a class in the 1984 election was as a ball and chain hobbling Walter Mondale: he was viewed as over-obligated to trade unions, which were seen not as representatives of a great mass of people but as a "special interest."

The youthful rebellion of the nineteen-sixties occurred amid unprecedented affluence. It may be that no generation in history has been less concerned with economic security than the young—especially the college-educated young—of that time. If young people in the ensuing decades were amazed to discover things that few people in any other time had lost sight of—that to live it is necessary to have money, and that to have money it is necessary, unless one is born rich, to work—and if those discoveries have precipitated an about-face in the thinking of some of them, and if society at large, too, is so struck by the phenomenon of suited young people (women now as well as men) seeking employment and advancement, then surely one reason is that in the nineteen-sixties these hitherto universal features of human life were, for a giddy moment, believed by millions of people to belong to the past, and were forgotten. (These features of life, of course, were not forgotten by other millions of people—probably a majority—who knew themselves to be still regulated by the laws of economic necessity. But even these people may have entertained the belief that the days of economic hardship were numbered by economic growth, which seemed to many to have no inherent limit.) Statistics offer support for this economic interpretation. Between 1950 and 1973, average real income (measured in 1984 dollars) for families with two children rose from fourteen thousand dollars to twenty-eight thousand dollars, but between 1973 and 1984 the figure actually dropped—to twenty-six thousand dollars. Also, whereas in 1949 a thirty-year-old male could expect his earnings to increase, after adjusting for inflation, by sixty-three per cent over the next decade, and in 1959 a thirty-year-old male could anticipate an increase of forty-nine per cent over the next decade, by 1973 a thirty-year-old male would have to assume a one-per-cent decline in earnings in the following ten years. At just the moment that a significant part of a generation started to act as if it were the first in human history to be released from the bonds of economic necessity (a belief buttressed by the government-sponsored conviction that poverty could now be eliminated from the United States almost painlessly), an economic downturn was beginning. The magnitude of the downturn was not great—it was nothing like the Great Depression, for example—but the expectations of unending economic growth that it dashed were great, and the political consequences, too, it appears, were great.

WHEN Mark Goff, the home secretary to Representative Jim Moody, who represented the Fifth District, which contains Sherman Park, was ten years old, he was given his first bicycle—a three-speed Schwinn with fat tires and gleaming silver fenders. Goff was living with his mother in a tough, blue-collar factory neighborhood on the south side of Milwaukee, and he did not like living there. His father had died in 1948, when he was a year old, and shortly thereafter his mother, unable any longer to afford to live in the suburb of Whitefish Bay, in which the family had bought a house, moved to the south side, where she had grown up and where relatives still lived. "We were struggling," Goff told me one day in mid-October as he drove us through that neighborhood. He was giving me a tour of several parts of the city. "I knew I didn't belong here," he went on. "Our family was well spoken and well educated; we were definitely middle class. This was a rough area—there were gangs of greasers; it was Lunch-Bucket City. I had not been taught to enjoy violence." Goff was a slender man with straight brown hair, boyish features, and the self-effacing manner of many political aides. He also possessed the voluminous, detailed political knowledge found in the best of those aides. On his belt was a pager by which he could be summoned to telephone Moody's downtown office; when used, it gave off a low, discreet hum—more a vibration than an actual buzz. Having lived among working-class families, Goff went on to tell me, he had suddenly found himself pushed up into the middle class when his mother sent him to a parochial high school attended mostly by children of middle-class parents; by then, however, he had learned through hard knocks and diligent application to act in a tough, working-class way, and once again he found himself a misfit. "I just didn't know who I was," he remarked to me. At age twelve, while he was still in elementary school, the bicycle offered a means of escape. He decided that summer to cycle through every part of Milwaukee. "I decided that I was going to learn the city—just like that," he said. "Every morning, I would sit down with a map and lay out my route. I wanted to know what the city was all about—to know what was out there. I knew I didn't belong where I was. In a way, I was trying to find my roots."

Twenty-two years after the twelve-year-old boy crisscrossed the city on his bicycle, Goff had repeated a good part of the experience, this time on foot. He had been acting as advance man for Jim Moody, then a state senator, who had decided that the best way to win the Democratic primary in the Fifth District was to visit every house of a primary voter that he could. In all, he and Goff had visited about twenty-four thousand houses out of perhaps sixty thousand. It had taken fifteen months, and Moody had won the primary, and he went on to win the general election. Goff's job had been to herald the candidate's arrival. As we travelled through Goff's old neighborhood on the south side, he pointed out its characteristic "Polish

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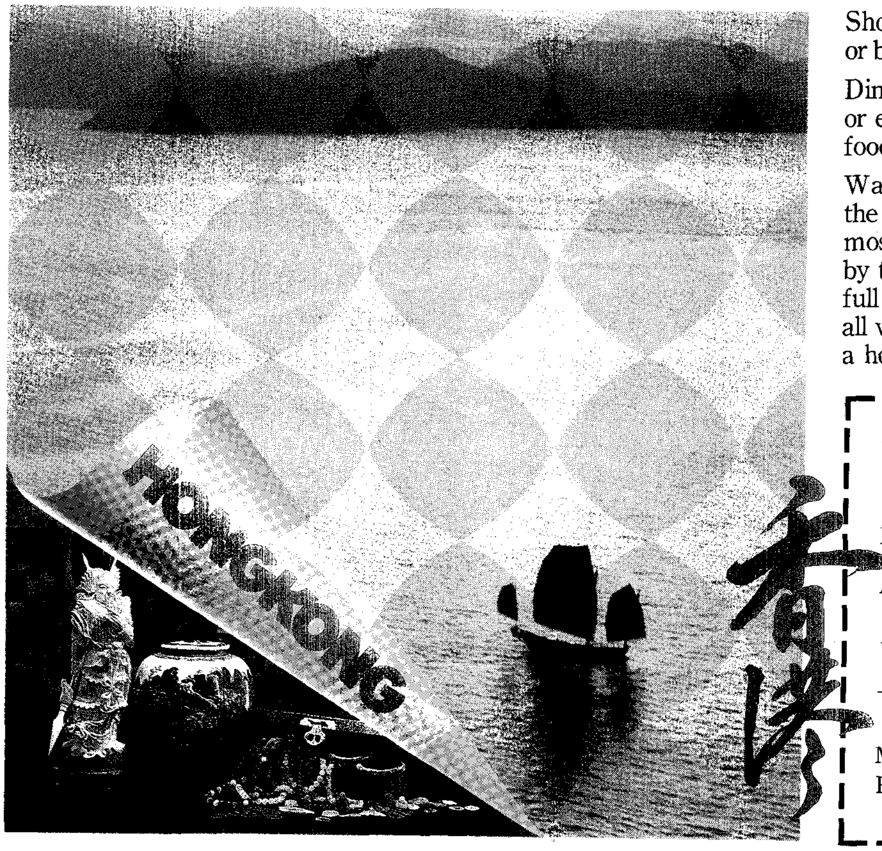

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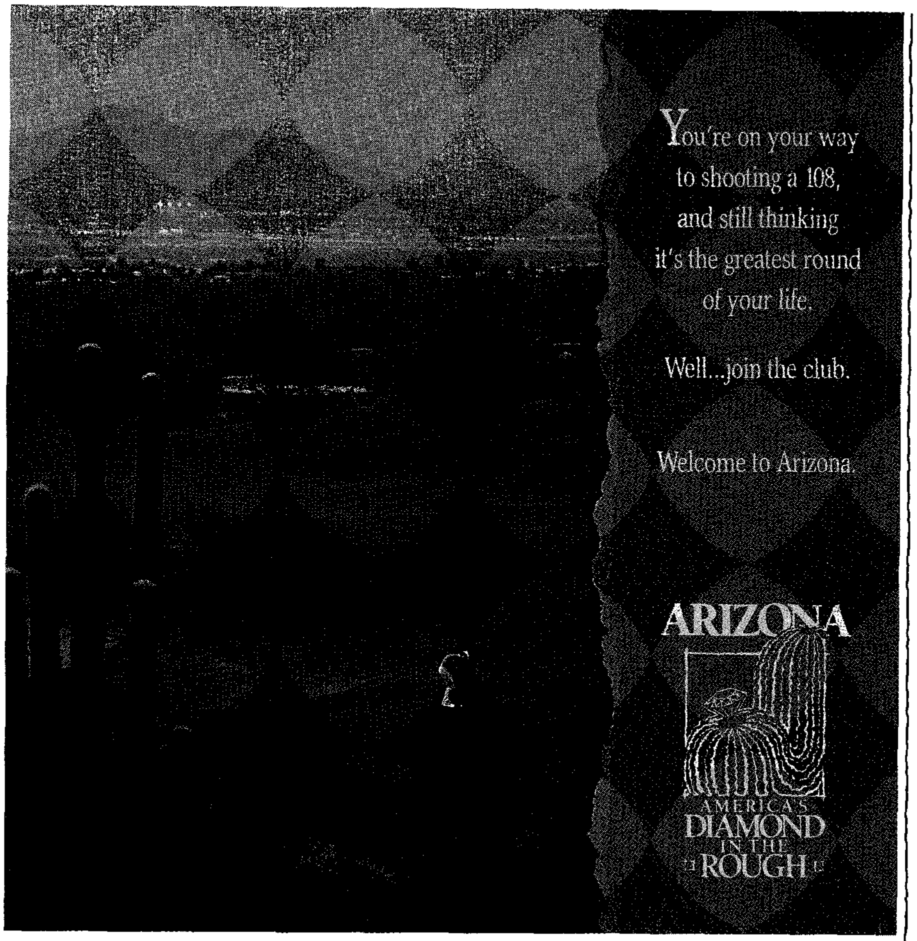

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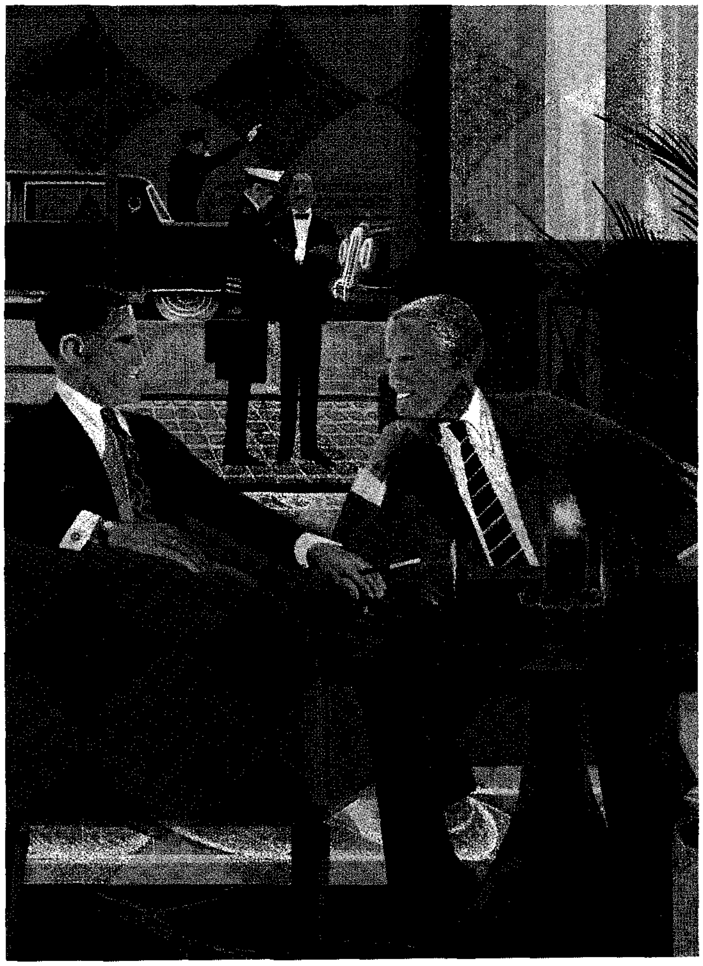

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flats," whose bottom floor is half underground, with windows reaching to ground level and whose upper story is reached by a stoop. They were built as single-family dwellings; the family would live upstairs and rent the downstairs or use it as a parlor for entertaining guests. But when the children grew up they would often be given the downstairs to live in. We went north through a neighborhood called Story Parkway—"mostly Irish; flicks back and forth politically; went for Reagan in '80," Goff informed me—and came to Grant Boulevard, in the heart of the Sherman Park neighborhood. The boulevard was lined with large, gracious two-story or three-story houses, many of which were slightly rundown. Some of them, Goff told me, were the homes of the liberal activists for which Sherman Park was notable. Pointing to one house, he said, "There is an Irish family there that has adopted a black kid. That's typical." We went west, out of Sherman Park and into a more modest neighborhood, consisting mostly of bungalows. Suddenly Goff brought the car to a halt in front of a small bungalow. It hardly seemed distinguishable from any of hundreds of others that we had just passed, but it was just this that had impressed him. "Now, *this* is Milwaukee," he announced happily. "This is *the* Milwaukee house. We could drive northwest for several miles and see almost nothing but houses like this." He spoke with the relish of a collector and connoisseur, as perhaps only someone who had visited twenty-four thousand houses something like this one could do. "Look at that aluminum door!" he exclaimed. "Now, this is a one-and-a-half-story aluminum-sided house. In a month, there'll be a sign on the front telling you to enter through the back door, so you won't track mud and snow through the living room. The winters in this town are killing. See how the grass has been trimmed to the millimetre? Not a weed in the whole lawn. Woe betide the ugly little blade of crabgrass that sticks its head up in *this* lawn some fair Saturday morning. Look how the bushes are also trimmed to perfection. And don't miss that low, two-or-three-inch metal edging around the little garden under the window." Goff's voice rang with admiration. "That's so the dirt from the flower beds won't encroach on that little concrete path next to them," he explained. "Notice the nicely arranged tulip bed. The guy who lives here added that

"Steve used to be a slave to TV."

chain-link fence between the lawn and the sidewalk sometime in the last ten years, when the neighborhood started to 'go bad.' " Goff began to tell me about the man he imagined living in the house. "He's fifty-four, or maybe he's sixty, about to retire from the factory. After he got out of the Army, he raised four kids in that damn house, and it's his turf, his little piece of the world. He's a nice guy. But that guy across the street"—Goff pointed to a middle-aged black man who was unloading groceries from the trunk of his car—"has got him scared out of his wits. He doesn't know where that man over there comes from or what he's doing here."

I asked Goff what, if he judged by his visits to the twenty-four thousand houses in the area, was going through the mind of the hypothetical man in the little house.

"Fear," Goff said, without hesitation.

"Fear of what?" I asked.

"Of economic insecurity, above all. He's afraid for his financial future. He's afraid that the American dream won't turn out to be what he thought it was going to be. He's afraid that his Social Security isn't going to hold up. He's afraid that his kids won't be able to afford a house like this one. He's afraid that the Japanese are taking over the car industry. He's afraid that Qaddafi will get a nuclear bomb and everything will be blown up."

"Is that last fear an active one?" I asked.

"It's just under the surface," he answered. "But it's there. I encountered it again and again in my walking tour with Moody. When this guy was younger, he experienced the civil-defense scare. Now he hears about nuclear winter from Carl Sagan. This anxiety is not in the foreground, but it underlies the whole mood of instability."

WITH Goff's forcefully spoken word "fear" sounding in my ears, I went to see Don Taylor, the president of the Waukesha State Bank and a co-chairman of the Reagan-Bush campaign in Wisconsin, and asked him for a Republican view of the public's state of mind in Milwaukee.

"There's an upbeat feeling," he told me. "No one wants to feel that he is on the way down—that all we can do is hang on. Young people are enthusiastic. In the high school that my son attends, here in Waukesha, one of the teachers in the social-studies department, who is a Democrat—he's a fine fellow, but he's an avowed Democrat—says that for the first time an overwhelming majority of the students are for the Republican candidate. They like Reagan. You know, no one wants to think that everything is running out—oil, money, environmental resources—and that's the Democratic line. They told us the oil supply was limited, but now there's a glut. So it turns out that maybe there's *not* a limit on the supply after all. That's the stuff kids want to hear. If I were a kid, maybe I'd like to hear that there were no limits on these things. Kids don't want to feel that if they strive and succeed that means they'll be depriving someone else. They want to feel that everything's going up. My articulation of the general mood is: all of a sudden, there's a future." Taylor was sitting at his desk in his bank. When I had been told that he was the president of the bank, I had expected hushed office suites, heavy draperies, and cordons of secretaries murmuring, "Mr. Taylor is ready to see you now." Instead, I found him in the lobby of the bank with the other bank officers, seated at a desk, in no way different from theirs, that stood up against a waist-high barrier dividing the officers from the teller area, and I had only to walk up to him to meet him. He was a thin man in his early fifties, and he was wearing horn-rimmed glasses, a blue blazer, and brown slacks. On his desk were a plaque that read "Don L. Taylor, President" and a jar of jelly beans. Plate-glass windows on three sides of the lobby gave a view of traffic speeding by on two sides and of a parking lot, in which people in cars were lined up to do business at drive-in windows. Taylor, who grew up in Waukesha, and is part American Indian, had succeeded his father, the bank's founder, as its president. He had always been a deeply convinced Republican. In the early nineteen-sixties, he had become disillusioned with the Presbyterian church he had been attending and alarmed by what he saw as a wholesale collapse of moral standards in American society, and had joined a nondenominational church—the Elmbrook Church—in Waukesha. "I see the breaking of all the Commandments," he said to me darkly. "Starting with the First: 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.' " Taylor gave me a significant look while speaking the words of the First Commandment, as if to say that sometimes people forgot to mention that one. "I see adultery, stealing, and false witness. And the one most often violated is 'Thou shalt not covet.' This is broken almost as a way of life. You also see flagrant violation of sexual morality—but that's actually just more coveting. At our church, we have a half-hour TV show, and a man as senior pastor—Stuart Briscoe—who in my opinion is the best expositor of the Bible in the world. He's so eloquent! There's an excitement just to being in church. It's vital, alive, full of promise. It reminds me of the Reagan campaign."

In his free time, Taylor was working on a historical novel, "in the style of Hardy," he said. "Hardy picked southern England," he explained. "I've picked Waukesha. It will be a love story—no politics in it—and I'm calling it 'The Prairieville Storekeeper.' "

I told Taylor of Goff's description of the average voter's fearful state of mind, and remarked that it was far different from his own notion of an almost euphoric public mood. I asked if he noticed any fear or worry among the voters.

"I don't pick that up," he said. "I mean, I do see some of the things he's talking about. I'm not going to sit here and tell you that the glass is completely full. But the only thing the Democrats talk about is raising taxes, and the people aren't going to buy it. They don't want to hear that."

I asked whether, as a banker, he was worried about the budget deficit, which the Democratic plan to raise taxes was designed to reduce.

"At least in the short run, I see no connection with taxes," he said. "As a long-range problem, the deficit is serious, however."

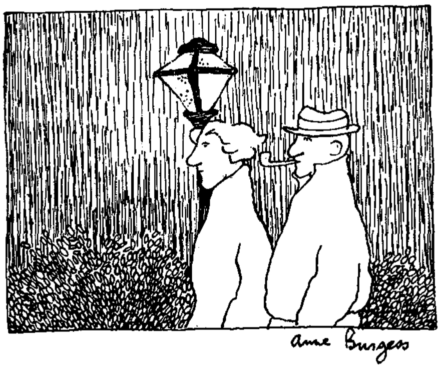
"Do you think that people have the threat of nuclear war on their minds?" I asked.

"In this community, it's not a dreaded cloud," he said. "The reaction to that movie on television 'The Day After' was that people didn't watch it in the first place. They just turned off the set. It was awfully far-fetched, I thought. We're all going to die anyway."

"But isn't there a difference between one's own death and the destruction of the whole world?"

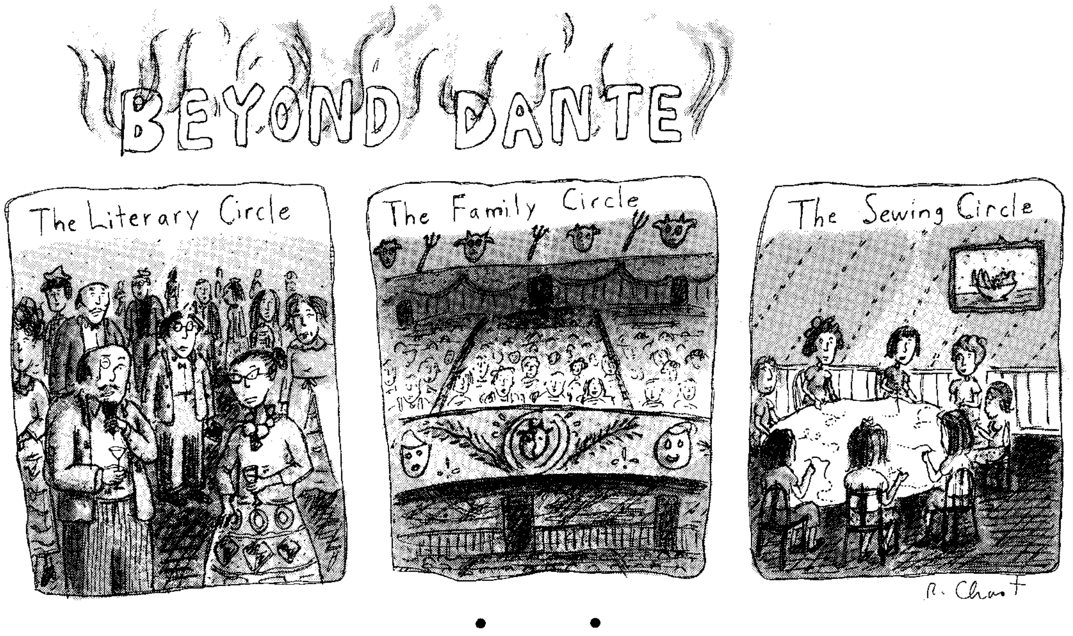
"That depends on your religious beliefs. In both cases, the Lord will decide. If He wants to terminate my life, or to terminate the world, it will happen. No, I don't see any difference. It's all in God's hands. The world is His creation, and whatever He wants to do with it is O.K. with me. If I were in His position, the world would have terminated long ago." Taylor smiled pleasantly, and shook his head. "From what I know of Sodom and Gomorrah, they weren't worse than what we see today." He reflected for a few moments. "I'll tell you a little story about the reaction to nuclear war. Last night, at about six-twenty, the sirens went off in the school building. Usually, they go off only at noon. Otherwise, it means that there's a tornado warning. And if it's not that it's a nuclear alert. But the sky was perfectly clear, so it was plain that there was no tornado. My son and I were sitting in the family room, reading. 'It *must* mean a tornado,' I said to him. 'No, I think a nuclear bomb is coming,' he said to me. Then we went back to our reading."

PESSIMISM or optimism: a surprising choice to be asked to make in an election year, perhaps, but one that was evidently playing a crucial role in the campaign. In the mid-nineteen sixties, roughly speaking, the United States, without quite realizing it, may have reached an apogee of national self-confidence and optimism about the future. Economic growth had continued, with only minor setbacks, since the Second World War, bringing record prosperity, and the outlook for future growth, it seemed, was unbounded. Poverty in the United States, against which the President had declared "war," appeared almost an anachronism—a shameful leftover from earlier times which could be removed in short order and without any serious sacrifices by the prosperous majority. In the world at large, poor countries had come to be known as "underdeveloped" ones—countries not *yet* developed. (The poor ye always have with you; the underdeveloped are on their way to future prosperity.) Futurologists of the day were already beginning to wonder how the people of a "leisure society" were going to manage to spend their time after their work had been taken away from them by galloping automation. The promise of boundless economic growth was good news for the whole world, of course, but it was especially good for the United States, which held the dominant position in the world economy. Our power, too, was dominant. We had not lost a war in this century. Though in the Soviet Union we faced a fearful rival, we had the wherewithal, it appeared, to meet the challenge. Even political differences, as was suggested in "The End of Ideology," by Daniel Bell, were likely, many people thought, to be left behind in the surge of technical progress. Nuclear weapons, it was true, shadowed this scene with their menace, but somehow they were not a preoccupation. Both the "ban the bomb" movement of the late nineteen-fifties and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 had sunk into memory.



In the nineteen-seventies and the nineteen-eighties, this hopeful outlook was considerably dimmed by the appearance on the horizon of what seemed to many people to be fundamental limits. The Democrats in 1984 rejected the Republicans' characterization of them as "pessimists," but it would be hard to deny that in the last decade or so they had embraced a philosophy in which the idea of limits was prominent. The Vietnam War, the national leadership of the Democratic Party had come to believe, had shown the limits on the effectiveness of military intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. Damage to the natural world had shown the limits on the natural world's ability to withstand pollution injected into it by human activities, including, above all, industrial production. The energy crisis and other scarcities showed that natural resources were limited, and would one day run out. Finally, nuclear weapons had brought mankind up against the ultimate limit—its mortality as a species—and had placed an insuperable obstacle in the way of the use of force as a means of settling global disputes with other great powers. It was thoroughly consistent with this philosophy of limits that when the federal budget deficit rose to nearly two hundred billion dollars it was the Democrats and not the Republicans who proposed painful measures, such as increased taxes, to deal with it, foreseeing economic disaster if nothing was done.

The Republicans under President Reagan explicitly or implicitly rejected



the existence of every one of the limits that the Democrats had accepted as real. What the Democrats saw as actualities that had to be faced, even at great cost, the Republicans saw as phantoms produced by a defeatist mentality. The notion of limits on the usefulness of military intervention—the so-called "lesson" of Vietnam—was actually weakness, a "loss of nerve," they said. The ecological limits, while perhaps having some reality, had been greatly overstated, and the need of the moment was to liberate free enterprise from excessive regulation, environmental and otherwise. Nuclear missiles, while admittedly fearsome, were not as powerful, or as paralyzing militarily, as the Democrats said, and, in any case, could be defended against with the President's Strategic Defense Initiative: they were a technical problem that had a technical solution. Finally, the way to reduce the budget deficit was not to increase taxes but, rather, to reduce them, while also reducing social spending, so that the economy would grow; then, according to the predictions of supply-side economics, even a lower tax rate would yield increased revenues, and the budget deficit would melt away. The Democrats' embrace of budgetary restraint and the Republican Administration's effective abandonment of it (although the Reagan Administration still paid lip service to the goal of a balanced budget by supporting a constitutional amendment to achieve it) marked the culmination of a philosophical reversal in which the Republicans, traditionally the champions of governmental prudence and austerity, became the champions of unlimited "growth" and soaring expectations, while the Democrats, traditionally the champions of spending and growth, attempted to assume the role of stern disciplinarians of the country's profligate ways. The difference in philosophy was reflected in the personalities of the two candidates. Mondale, the son of a minister, had in him something of the scolding parent, whereas Reagan, the former movie actor, had the manner of an indulgent uncle or grandfather.

The Democrats saw great perils ahead, and feared for the consequences if no action was taken. The Republicans denied or played down the perils, and saw fear itself as the danger. (At the Republican Convention, for example, Representative Jack Kemp, of New York, had said, "Mr. Mondale and his party's platform have nothing to offer but fear: fear of the future, fear of growth, fear of global leadership." And the Republican platform stated that the Democratic Party "offers Americans redistribution instead of expansion, contraction instead of growth, and despair instead of hope.") Fundamentally, the parties disagreed not on what to do about the world's problems but on what those problems were—on what the state of the world was. As it happened, one of the most important events of the nineteen-eighties—the apparent disappearance of the energy crisis and its replacement by an oil glut—offered powerful confirmation of the Republican point of view, as Don Taylor pointed out. Of all the limits, the energy crisis of 1973, caused by the Arab nations' oil embargo, was the one that had reached most tangibly into people's lives—bringing sharply higher prices at the gasoline pumps, inflation in the economy as a whole, and, perhaps, a recession. To alleviate it, President Carter, who had thermostats lowered to sixty-five degrees in the White House, proposed the "moral equivalent of war." The 1984 campaign, observers were saying, was run on the basis of themes chosen by the candidates, and the Democrats' theme of limits was seriously discredited by the oil glut. Having seen one limit melt away—for the time being, at least—many voters in 1984 questioned the reality of the others. (To the extent that the oil glut discredited the Democrats' theme of limits and confirmed the Republicans' theme of growth without limits, Reagan's term of office can be seen as an oil-glut Presidency.)

Don Taylor found an "upbeat" atmosphere around him, whereas Mark Goff discovered a climate of "fear," and it might seem unlikely that the two men lived in the same country; but as I talked to the voters of the Sherman Park neighborhood it seemed to me that the two moods might go together. The titles of two more books of the nineteen-sixties—"The Affluent Society," by John Kenneth Galbraith, and "The Arrogance of Power," by Senator J. William Fulbright—perhaps capture the confident mood of that time. Both authors were sharply critical of government policies (to Galbraith, it seemed shortsighted that the government should not spend more on social projects when the over-all wealth of the country was so great; to Fulbright, the country's use of its power to force small countries, including, above all, Vietnam, to do our will, was mistaken and wrong), but both wrote against the backdrop of assumed immense national wealth and might. The controversial word in the title of the Fulbright book was "arrogance;" the "power" was taken for granted. It was against this backdrop of confidence in the country, too, that the protests of the nineteen-sixties were mounted. That the United States was powerful and rich the protesters—the

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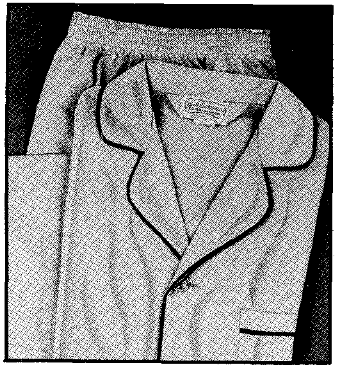

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"pessimists" of their day—did not doubt; they only wanted the power and the riches to be applied to different ends. (Indeed, by attributing so many of the world's ills to the United States, some of them may have implicitly exaggerated the country's power.) It is perhaps only in retrospect that we can appreciate how much confidence people in the nineteen-sixties had in the future, since it is only now that we know how many reasons there were to have been more doubtful. The reasons are, of course, all of the limits and obstacles—ecological, military, economic, and political—to economic growth and the use of power that the Democrats in 1984 embraced as real and the Republicans rejected as illusory. If the "optimistic" Republicans were right, the limits could be safely overlooked, because they did not exist; if the "pessimistic" Democrats were right, reality, slighted by the Republican policies, would exact its revenge in the future. In 1984, the latter view was in political disfavor—young people, as Taylor said, clearly did not "like" to believe it—but the question at least weighed on people's minds. Just as the "pessimism" that first took hold in the late nineteen-sixties developed against the background of an unparalleled national self-assurance, so it might be that the "optimism" of the nineteen-eighties was being nourished by underlying fear and self-doubt.

ON the afternoon of September 26th, President Reagan came to Milwaukee, to speak at Old Heidelberg Park, in the well-to-do suburb of Glendale. That afternoon, the crowd—prosperously dressed, country-clubbish—filed into the private park through security gates. They were there by invitation of the Republican Party, and people without tickets were being turned away. Inside the gates was a large pavilion walled on three sides and open on the fourth, the open side looking out on a park with trees and picnic tables. Several hundred demonstrators had tried to attend, but they had been restricted by the police to a street several blocks away. In the pavilion, where long tables had been set up, further restrictions were in force; the President was to speak from a rostrum inside the pavilion, and certain people could sit at the long tables, while most other people were restricted to the park area. Around the high wooden walls of the pavilion were paintings of scenes of the native countries of some of Milwaukee's immigrant groups. An oom-pah band was playing, and on a platform in front of the rostrum dancers in German costumes were performing Bavarian folk dances. Later, other groups, including a mostly black group of high-school students, performed other dances. I approached a knot of teen-age boys in blazers and asked how they happened to be there. One told me that they were Reagan supporters, and that they had come from the suburb of Menomonee Falls, in a bus provided for the occasion by the Republican Party. I asked them why they liked Reagan, and got a chorus of answers.

"I like him because he's old."

"My allowance goes further."

"He's doing better than Carter."

"He's a movie star."

"I like his hair."

I asked what they thought of Mondale.

"He doesn't know how to talk."

"I don't like Ferraro."

"He just doesn't have it."

A boy with a pale-brown complexion and brown curly hair approached the group, and said, "We need a change. Reagan has done nothin'."

The others groaned.

"Look at the facts," one said.

Another turned to me and, jerking a thumb at the newcomer, said, "He's a minority—the only one in our school. He's Mexican. That's why he goes for Mondale."

"So what *are* the facts?" the newcomer asked.

There was a silence.

"Well, he got us closer to China, didn't he?" one boy said, doubtfully.

Deciding to ask about one or two specific policies, I inquired whether they approved of Reagan's handling of the environment.

"He's been cleaning it up a little," one boy said.

I inquired what they thought about the federal budget deficit.

"There's always a budget deficit."

I asked what they thought about nuclear weapons.

"Throw 'em away."

"Reagan's getting closer to the Russians now."

"He'll be trying a freeze soon."

We became aware of a deep throbbing sound—more a shuddering of the air, at first, than a noise. Then it intensified to a low thunder. Then it became deafening. It was the fleet of helicopters carrying President Reagan and his party from the airport. The deafened crowd looked in the direction of the roar, and grew still for a moment. Invading and overwhelming the rustic park scene, the roar seemed to me to embody the unimaginable power of the Presidency in the nuclear age. A few minutes later, through a back door of the pavilion several dozen men, many dressed in what looked like paramilitary gear and carrying elaborate equipment, rushed in and began to run about. It was the national photographic press travelling with the Reagan campaign. None of the restrictions regulating everyone else applied to them; they could go anywhere, and did. Some raced down aisles between the tables of local notables, seeking camera angles. Others swarmed over the performance platform. One jumped onto the rostrum, as if he were the President, and took a reading with a light meter. Then a corps of immaculately tailored, athletic-looking young men with wires coming out their ears entered—the Secret Service. Finally, the President—smiling, diffident, rosy-cheeked—entered through the door in the back. The crowd rose to its feet and applauded. Someone at the rostrum started to lead a chant—"U.S.A.! U.S.A.!"—and the crowd took it up for a few moments, but then, apparently not finding that slogan to its taste, switched spontaneously to "Four more years! Four more years!" Excitement in the room was high; people craned their necks to glimpse the President or touch his hand as he passed down one of the aisles.

The President gave a standard stump speech, promising a tough foreign policy, accusing the Democrats of being big spenders and taxers, complimenting the Milwaukeeans on their state and city. He called Mondale "Coach Tax Hike." He spoke of his forthcoming meeting with Gromyko, and promised to tell Gromyko that the United States was "unshakable in our commitment to freedom," and promised, "We will never again allow America to let down its guard." He said, "You know, the people of Milwaukee are as well known for your love of good beer as the liberal Democrats are for their taxing and spending; the difference is that you know when to stop." As he spoke, the excitement in the crowd seemed to wane, and the applause at the end, though vigorous, was sedate. When the President finished, a little blond girl in ethnic dress who had been standing behind him raced forward and presented him with a bouquet of flowers. The zipper sound of still cameras in action filled the air. Flashlamps flashed, lights lit up, and, for a few moments, the cafeteria blazed with white light.

THAT evening, Bill, Gina, and I watched the coverage of the Reagan visit on Channel 6, the local CBS affiliate. The local reporter duly noted that only people with tickets had been invited to hear the President, and that demonstrators had been kept far away.

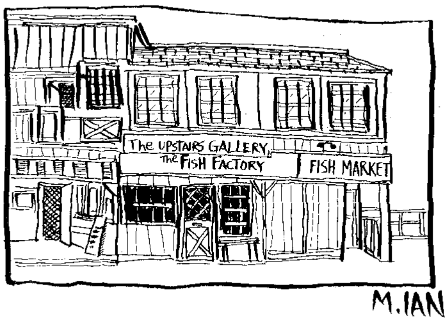
"It's not *fair* that only people with tickets could go to a rally for the President of the United States," Gina said.

"I agree, Gina, but from a political point of view it worked," Bill said, "because you don't see him on TV getting heckled by demonstrators."

"Well, that's why I don't trust him. He's suave. He knows all the moves."

"If Mondale and Ferraro did the same, they'd get more votes," Bill said. "Just think of the Mondale appearance we saw where there were all those demonstrators yelling at him." Recently, Mondale had been heckled by Reagan supporters at a number of his campaign appearances. "Reagan looked a lot better. The fact that he sent tickets out was bad publicity, but it was overshadowed politically by the favorable image we saw." Bill spoke as if it gave him satisfaction to regard the campaign in this coolly strategic light.

IF there was one thing that the two parties agreed on in this election year, it was on how sharply they disagreed. The preamble to the Democratic platform said that "a fundamental choice awaits America—a choice between two futures." Reagan said that Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro were "so far left they've left America." The Republican Party platform described the election as a choice "between two diametrically opposed visions of what America should be." Labelling the Democrats with "d" words—doom, despair, defeatism, decline, and so on—was standard Republican rhetoric. "The nightmare years" was a standard description of the Carter period. Any voter who took the claims of either party seriously probably would have had to conclude that the other party was, at best, out of its mind or, at worst, deliberately bent on destroying the Republic. And if these opinions were shared by the public as a whole one would have expected to find rancor, insult, mutual incomprehension, and contempt in people's political discussions. But I encountered no feelings of this kind among any of the people I talked to in Milwaukee about the election. No one was angry at anyone else or contemptuous of anyone else. No one thought that anyone else was disloyal to the country. No one thought that anyone else should be beaten up, or sent to Russia, or thrown in jail. (Even the opponents of abortion, who were ready to go to great lengths to illegalize it, temporized on the subject of jail sentences.) Instead, I found a broad and deep spirit of tolerance—almost a will to find agreement, or, at least, to make light of disagreement. I encountered no fanaticism in Milwaukee. On the contrary, people's views tended, if anything, to be muted, amorphous, and mild. People of different views were close friends—sometimes, as in the case of Bill and Gina, they were married to each other. The friendships and the marriages always easily transcended the political differences. And yet people did not seem to have arrived at some happy political middle ground, as if they had split the difference between the two parties. Rather, the views of each party found their reflection in people's thinking, but the differences failed to generate conflict. This was true not only between family members and friends who held different views but also within the minds of individuals. Just as there was no rancor when two people disagreed, there was no tension when one person found himself attracted by two opposing views. Fred Skoretsky had once voted for the Socialist Workers candidate Peter Camejo and now intended to vote for President Reagan, but he saw little conflict between these positions; to him, there was an underlying continuity. Paul Toruncyk still regarded himself as a liberal yet found himself at the same time looking at that liberalism from without and calling it "tired old liberalism." John Carlton, the former McGovern activist, was going to vote for Reagan but mused that if people who opposed his policies rejected "this nonsense" it might have an effect. Even in Bill, who strongly



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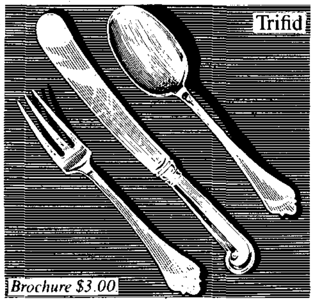

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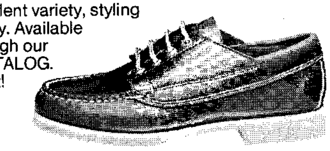

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believed in his conservative principles, the pull of liberalism made itself felt—as when, hearing Gina disagree with him, he would sometimes say, "I agree with that." At those times, I felt he was giving expression to ideas that had become dim embers in his mind but could flare up again, albeit weakly, when they were fanned by another person. Listening to the politicians, one would have found it hard to imagine how anyone could be in a state of indecision between the two candidates—how anyone's opinion could be so unformed as to swing so easily between violently opposed political philosophies. But as I listened to the voters in Sherman Park I found that many—in fact, most—of them were pulled in both directions at once. Usually, the process of internal deliberation did not seem to take the form of a debate, as on "balanced" television discussions; rather, people seemed to entertain new views as a sort of unit even as they held to old ones, much as when one is listening to the radio while driving through the countryside a new station may start making itself heard at the same point on the dial as the station one is already listening to, until the second station finally drowns out the first.

ON the night of the first national debate between Reagan and Mondale, Gina, Bill, his sister Kate, and I gathered in the Gapolinskys' living room. Kate, who was married to a man named Pete Lueders, was a tall, ample woman whose rapid flow of conversation was often punctuated by a quick, sweet, self-depreciating smile. Her hair was cut straight and short, and she was wearing a voluminous blue corduroy maternity dress. When she arrived, she put on a pair of gray slippers that were shaped like elephants, with trunks and ears and faces looking straight up from the toes. She curled up on the couch next to Bill. As the debate began, Bill rested a hand lightly on one of her elephant slippers; then, for a few moments, he rested his head on her shoulder. They seemed entirely at ease with one another, as people sometimes are who have grown up together in a close and affectionate family.

In the debate, which concerned domestic policy, Reagan appeared to have lost his usual affable poise: on several occasions, he stumbled in his speech and seemed at a loss for words. Mondale, on the other hand, appeared self-confident and in command of his arguments and facts. When the debate was over, these differences in performance seemed to weigh more heavily with the company than any substantive arguments made. For Bill, the impression that he imagined Reagan must have made on others seemed almost more important than whatever impression Reagan had made on him, and he opened our conversation by saying, "I think everyone's pretty much going to say that Mondale won." (The comments of the professional observers on television immediately after the debate, in the press the next day, and in public-opinion polls later proved him right.) "Mondale did real good," Bill added. "He kicked Reagan's ass. He was well organized and well prepared. He won hands down. Most news people and objective people would have to say that Mondale won." Bill said this in judicious tones, as if he were giving a report.

"You see?" Gina said, rubbing it in. "They took away his script and the Great Communicator fell apart."

I asked if any of them thought that the debate had revealed anything important about the two men.

"I thought it revealed that Reagan wasn't as good a politician as I thought he was," Bill said.

"Do you think he perhaps just had an off night?" I asked.

"If you're going to be President for four years, you shouldn't have an off night like that," Bill answered severely.

I asked what they thought of Mondale.

"I was a lukewarm supporter, and now I'm an enthusiastic one," Kate said.

"As I've said, if Mondale could do everything he said he would do I'd vote for him," Bill said. "The big thing is the deficit. But I just don't think there's any way that anyone is going to vote to raise taxes to close it. Mondale can't do that, because the country is run by the rich. Reagan succeeds because he sees eye to eye with them. But if Mondale wipes out Reagan in the next debate I'll vote for him."

"I just hate what Reagan's doing in Nicaragua," Kate said, and Gina let out a big groan. She always did this when Nicaragua or El Salvador was mentioned. The conversation turned to foreign policy.

"Reagan thinks that as soon as those Commies get control of some little country they'll spread to more and more countries, and the next thing you know *we'll* be Communists," Gina said scornfully, adding, "That's old, disproven thinking."

"But a lot of people believe that," Kate observed.

"But shouldn't someone inform the American people? First, the people in those little countries want socialism, not Communism. That's different."

"They're nationalists," Kate chimed in.

"Yeah," Bill said. "But one thing is that when Carter took over, a lot of Third World countries were our allies, and then about fifteen or twenty of them turned against us. Reagan turned that around."

"Which ones are you talking about?" Kate challenged.

"That's probably just one of my naïve opinions," Bill said. "I'm in an optimistic mood, so when I read in the paper that our country is more respected I believe it. In the Carter period, one of my professors—a Democrat—said it was kind of disappointing how we were losing all our allies. He had a whole list of countries. Reagan built up our forces, and went into a couple of countries, such as Lebanon and Grenada, and whether or not it was good for America in every case in the short run I think it was good in the long run, because it shows people that if we see some aggression we don't like we're going to do more than just pull out of the Olympics. I thought that that was a silly and embarrassing thing for us to do—a really poor decision by Carter."

"Our policy is just to back anyone who says he'll protect our interests," Kate put in. "As long as they'll give us the resources we want, we don't care what they do with their own people."

"As long as we get our resources, we don't care even if they repress their people, or torture and kill them, or drop them out of helicopters into volcanoes," Gina said.

"Don't exaggerate," Kate said, with a smile. "I'm glad I get to say that first," she added. Apparently, she was used to being the first one reproached for exaggeration.

"I'm not exaggerating," Gina said. "The guy who preceded the Sandinistas—you know, Somoza—really used to do that to people who opposed his policies."

"Oh, well, I'm not going to vote for Reagan because Somoza dropped people into volcanoes," Bill said, with heavy sarcasm.

"The United States is missing the boat on a lot of things," Gina continued. "We should want what the majority wants, not what the tiny élites want. Socialism would be better for these people."

"Hell, *Communism* would be better," Bill said.

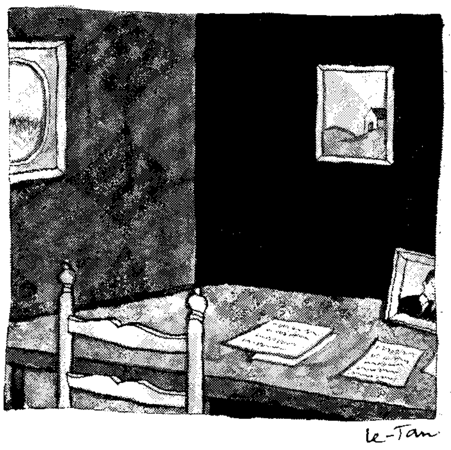
"I'm not *saying* Communism—I'm saying socialism," Gina said. "And that's different."

"But *I'm* saying that even *Communism* would be better. Maybe eighty or ninety per cent of those people are repressed. Even so, maybe we have to support the present governments, which are friendly to us."

"We should let people make their own mistakes," Kate said. "That's what I like to do. I don't want anyone telling me what to do. But that's what we've been doing for centuries with these other countries. We think we know better."

"Oh, yes, you're right," Bill said. "From a human-rights point of view, I know that you're right. It's like with nuclear weapons. I know that we have enough nukes to blow up the world forty-four times and that we should never use them, and should get rid of them. But *I know better*. From an American self-interested, survival point of view, I'd rather see us run their countries. If we don't repress these countries, we'll lose them as allies. Then, before you know it, it will be just us against the rest of the world. It'll be a hundred and seventy-five to one."

"I remember seeing some TV movie in which the C.I.A. was going to overthrow the governments of about three countries," Kate said, "and someone in the movie said that the public would be shocked if it knew. But someone else said the public wouldn't be shocked; they would be glad. I bet that ninety per cent of the people would agree to anything if that's what it took to continue their life style. They wouldn't care what was happening to other countries. I often wonder: Would I share my last rations with someone if I was dying? I just don't know."



"But that's simplistic," said Gina. "It's not a choice between taking over all these countries and having the whole world turn against us. You can compromise. That's what I like about Mondale. He knows how to get things done with compromise."

"The way I see it, there's a continuum," Bill said. "Let's say it's zero to a hundred. Everything depends on where you are on it. Zero is 'We only worry about ourselves and leave the rest of the world alone.' We help only our own people, spend all our money on good things, making sure our parks are in good shape and stuff like that. We wouldn't spend any money on weapons. There's *no way* we would have to kill anyone, or have any nuclear weapons, or take over anyone else's country. A hundred is 'We take over the world.' It all depends on where you are on the continuum. But a real righteous Christian can't be President. He'd never get in. He'd just get ripped apart. I'd just love to have the country run by righteous, trustworthy, good people. But they'd be torn to pieces. They couldn't run the country, and couldn't get in power in the first place. Look at the National Rifle Association. Why does it exist? And why is it so powerful? A majority of the people support gun control, but it will never happen. Never. That's America. That's business. Business *is* the country. When business does well, the country does well. Money runs the country. You know, politicians have to say, 'I don't agree with that—that's immoral—but I'll make a deal with you. I'll support this bad thing if you support me in this good thing.' That's the part I hate about politics and business. But that's the way it is."

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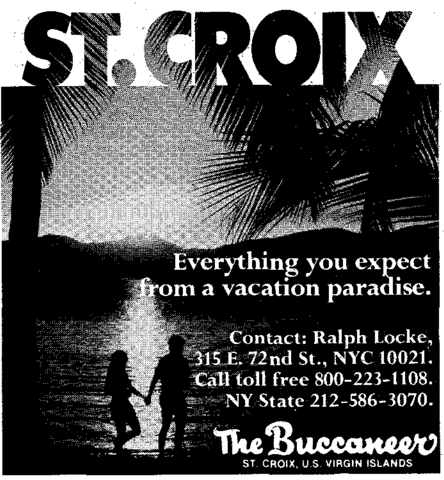

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south on Interstate 94 the morning after the Mondale-Reagan debate, on our way to oversee some changes in the cookie shelves of several supermarkets on Milwaukee's south side. "Standard American is just miles ahead of the competition," Bill said. "I can say to the manager of the store, 'Hey, let me put up an end display and I'll give you ten per cent off on Choco-Twists.' Or I can say, 'Give me that end space, and I'll give you a permanent end-display module.' When I go to a new store or chain, I go to the manager and I say, 'John, I want to emphasize to you the importance of the cookie section. The cookie section is increasing at nine per cent a year in sales. So you need more space for it. And cookies contribute five or six per cent of the gross profit of your store, which is a *lot*, because they only use one or two per cent of your space.' For selling, you need an action plan. I say, 'John, you don't need gum and candy at the front of every checkout counter. You could put in a little snack end display on wheels.' I'm already rolling it out at the guy. He really *can't* say no. He just can't." We turned into the parking lot of a Kohl's supermarket. Procter & Gamble, under the Duncan Hines label, was introducing a new line of "soft" cookies, creating uproar on the cookie shelves of America. The layout of the shelves and the distribution of space had to be rearranged. Sometimes—and this was the case today at several markets—all the cookies had to be taken off the shelves and put back in a different order. Cookies are sold by the "store-door" system, in which the salesmen for the major cookie companies place the cookies on the shelves and remove stale ones. (The older cookies are placed at the front of the shelf, so that they will be bought first.) The Standard American truck holds more than seventy different products, and the salesman should know at a glance where in the truck each one is, how many are in a box, and how many packages of a particular item will be required to fill a gap of a certain size on a shelf.

When we entered the Kohl's, Bill proceeded immediately to a Standard American end display and cast a sharply critical eye over it. "This is lousy," he said, with a scowl. "See how the bags are all tipping at different angles, and how they're sort of squashed into one another?" Bill began to pick up the bags of cookies, which were in a disorderly row, and, snapping them at both ends in a practiced gesture, plumped them up like pillows; then he lined them up in a neat, interleaved row. He repeated the procedure for the whole rack. The effect was that of an unmade bed being made, or a messy living room being tidied up: what had previously suggested neglect and demoralization now presented itself proudly and appetizingly to the world. Bill went on to another shelf, and here his scowl gave way to a smile. "Bob did this," he said. "He's my best salesman. Just look at this fine work. Do you see how all the bags are laced together, and how they face in the same direction, toward the flow of customer traffic—where the people will be just coming around the corner?" Bill's pleasure in the well-performed job was great. He loved to work, he worked extremely hard, and he respected the hard work of others. "I was wondering why I work hard," he once said to me. "Is it because of money? Sure, I like the money, and I need it—but that's not it. I'd work hard without the money. Do I do it for Standard American? I have an obligation to them, but that's not the reason, either. I do it because I just want to—because that's the way I am. And that's what Standard American knows about me. That's why they hire guys like me. They know that we just can't help working hard."

We met at the cookie shelves with salesmen from four other companies—Nabisco, Frito-Lay, Keebler, and Procter & Gamble. The new allocation of shelf space had already been decided, by a complicated process of negotiation, but the new plan presented a problem—an intricate puzzle—at this particular supermarket. Duncan Hines had supplied a special red plastic modular display, three feet wide, with its new line of cookies, and the manager had agreed to its use. In the natural spot for its placement, however, a pillar happened to intersect the shelf, leaving two feet on one side and one foot on the other. If the module was placed on either side, then even if the salesmen were willing to move all the cookies on the shelf, as they were, some other unacceptable result ensued—for example, the Nabisco display would be broken in the middle or Keebler would have to place its cookies across the aisle, where dishwashing supplies, not cookies, were on display. For the next two hours, the salesmen, talking together, considered at least twenty possible rearrangements of the cookie shelf, but each of them had some defect. Finally, a solution was arrived at that was satisfactory to all, but it required that a standard three-foot length of shelf be cut in two, and for that a saw was required, and so was permission from the manager of the store. After these were obtained, and the shelf was cut, by two of the salesmen, and all the cookies were rearranged in their proper places, the salesmen departed. The job had taken three hours, and had used up the lunch hour. That day, Bill skipped lunch.

In the car on the way to the next supermarket, I asked if our morning had been an unusual one.

“The problem with the shelf *was* unusual, but then there’s always *something* unusual that comes up.”

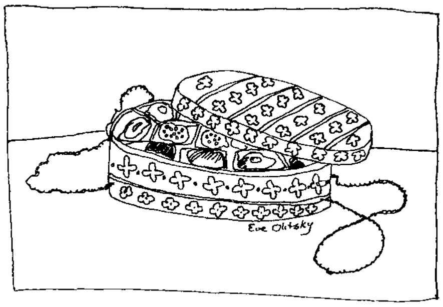
I asked if he ever got bored with his work.

“No,” he said. “I could probably get promoted if I wanted to; I could probably go to the tower”—the corporate headquarters, in Houston. “But I’m not sure I want to. I’ve talked to one of the guys in my office who has been there, and he said that it was all so damned manipulative that he’d never want to go. He said it’s just all politics. I’d be content to do what I’m doing now for the rest of my life.”

IN late October, I visited Kate and Pete, in the living room of their house, on the north side of the city. They were, in her words, “down-the-line Mondale supporters.” They were better attuned to the national debate on the election as it was presented by the news media than most other people I had talked to, and they consistently took the Democratic side of the argument. When I asked why they preferred Mondale, they answered by citing at least a dozen specific issues. For example, they opposed Reagan’s support of the Contra force in Nicaragua, fearing another war like the one in Vietnam; they worried that Reagan would pack the Supreme Court with justices of the far-right political persuasion; they worried that he was weakening environmental protections; they found his fear of Communism exaggerated and his defense buildup unjustified; they thought that his social policies favored the rich and were unfair to working people and the poor; they were disturbed by what they saw as a mingling of church and state represented by Republican support for prayer in the schools and by the evangelist Jerry Falwell’s prominence in Republican politics. They were prepared to defend their opinion on each of these issues as well as others at length and in detail. They brought forth their views in rapid succession, alternating in speaking, as if taking turns being the spokesman for views held in common. (Listening to Pete and Kate give their opinions on this multitude of issues, I was conscious that I was hearing about most of them for the first time since I had arrived to talk to people in Milwaukee. And as it turned out, in the case of many of the issues it was also the last time I was to hear about them. In press coverage—and, to a lesser degree, in television coverage—these issues figured importantly in the campaign. In the thinking of most of the people I talked to in Milwaukee, they were more or less absent.) Their living room contained many pieces of furniture in wood, some of them made by Kate’s father, who had been an expert woodworker. On the walls were several drawings of animals, and on the door was a drawing of a unicorn bearing the legend “Our faithful unicorn shall hassle whosoever disturbeth this castle.” A shelf of books included several historical books—among others, “The Year of Three Kings,” by Giles St. Aubyn; “Richard III,” by Charles Ross; and “Poland,” by James A. Michener. Kate said that she loved to read historical novels—especially those set in England.

I asked them how they had made their decision about the way they were going to arrange their lives after their baby was born. Pete, who worked at the post office, would stay at home and take care of the baby and the house, and Kate, who was also a postal worker, would remain at work.

“I never did like the work at the post office,” Pete said. He was a tall, thin, pale, long-limbed young man with red-rimmed glasses. He spoke in a deep, hollow voice. “In the sorting job, you have to sort fifty pieces of mail every minute, punching two numbers on a keyboard for each one. I had problems with dexterity. I’d get tired, and nervous. It can wreak havoc on your brain. Some can do it fine; others have trouble from the start. I’ll try being at home for a while, and see if I go crazy without a job. Right now, I’m painting the inside of the house, getting ready for the baby’s arrival.”



“I have no problem with the post-office work,” Kate said. “The base pay is twenty-four thousand a year, plus overtime, and I take all the overtime I can get. With Pete working, we were making about fifty-five thousand a year. It sounds like a lot, but somehow you spend it. Pete is much more ambitious and capable around the house than I ever could be. None of our friends have given us a hard time about our decision. They all understand. I guess I’ve always been the rebellious one in our family. As a girl, I didn’t think highly of myself—I thought I was fat and unattractive. My mother helped to give me that idea, I think. I remember two distinct occasions when she said I was fat and ugly. It wasn’t until years later that I got around to asking her why she had said it. She said she so much wanted me to be pretty in a conventional way. I told her it had given me an inferiority complex. Now she always says, ‘You look so well.’ We get along fine now. I value her more than I used to when I was fighting with her, and I want to see her more.

“It’s important to my political views that I refuse to look at anyone as a stereotype. In high school, about ten per cent of the kids were black, but I didn’t associate with them. When I took courses in history at the University of Wisconsin, I met guys with long hair, and some of those fellows were nice. They’re no different from me, I thought. Then, in the post office about thirty or forty per cent are black. Working with them, especially on overtime, I realized, Hey, these are nice people, too. Some of my closest confidants now are blacks. Once, a white guy at the post office came up to me and said, ‘The word is out that you like black guys.’ I told him to get lost. Later, I made friends with two guys who are gay, and the same guy came up again and said, ‘We see that you are talking with gay guys.’ And I said, ‘So I’m gay now?’ The fact is, I don’t like anybody telling me who I can talk to or who my friends should be.”

“ST. MARY’S was a real neighborhood,” Lawrence Kenny, Gina’s eighth-grade teacher at St. Mary of

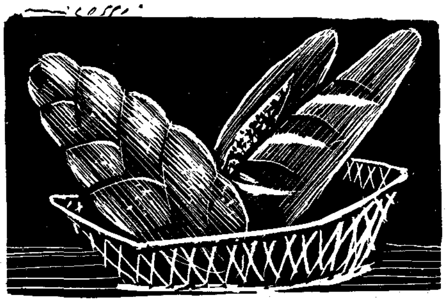
Czestochowa School, who was now a Milwaukee County supervisor, told me one day when I went to visit him in his office, in the county courthouse—a massive, gloomy, pillared, mausoleum-like structure that looms over downtown Milwaukee from a perch on a hill. Kenny was a short, slightly plump man of thirty-seven years, with a plump person's large face, out of the center of which, however, peered the features of a lean person—strong, thin lips that spread in a tight, toothy smile, a sharp-looking mustache, and watchful, dotlike eyes. He was wearing a blue blazer, and a blue-and-white striped embossed tie tied in a wide knot. As a young man teaching school, he had watched the transformation of the Milwaukee neighborhoods that the Gapolinsky children and Gina had lived in. "St. Mary's, at the time I was teaching there, was a neighborhood where you were born and where you died," he said. "It was a working-class neighborhood, near a lot of factories—American Motors, Coke, a couple of others. People married other people in the neighborhood. Grandma would live in the same building or on the same block. Maybe she owned a duplex and rented it to the family for fifty dollars a month, or maybe she wouldn't accept any money. The kids were nonprofessional—most didn't go to college. The idea was to date a girl from the neighborhood, get married to her, and stay there. It was pretty much solidly Democratic. I liked that kind of neighborhood. I grew up in strong neighborhoods in Chicago. We didn't ask whether someone was on the North Side or the South Side; we'd ask, 'What parish are you in?' But it didn't last. Every three years or so, we'd move farther southwest as the neighborhoods turned black."

Kenny had hoped that the St. Mary's neighborhood would last longer than the ones he grew up in in Chicago, but his hope was disappointed. The subversive force this time, as he saw it, was a period in American life—the nineteen-sixties, whose effects on the neighborhood he watched with some dismay. "When the sixties hit, salaries started to go way up," he said. "Union salaries at places like the Miller brewery rose from something like four dollars an hour to something like fifteen dollars an hour. There was a great accumulation of wealth. People started buying land up north and putting a shack on it—a second home—and going deer hunting. They began moving to the suburbs, or many of the kids moved to where Gina is now. Racial problems began. In the first week I was there, a kid was stabbed to death in a fight over a watch. When I was teaching at St. Mary's, there were four hundred and fifty kids there; now there are only about a hundred and twenty-five. The neighborhood lost its stability. TV had a lot to do with it. The message TV started to bring was 'Society is moving on; you should climb up the ladder': upward mobility. Now few of the old families are left. The educational philosophy was changing, too. The old ways were very simple: if one kid on the bus misbehaved, everyone was in trouble. They didn't teach values; they taught catechism. I tried to establish relationships with the kids and get them to think for themselves—to make them apply religious values to society rather than just remember what they learned in Sunday school about God. On TV, 'Ozzie and Harriet' disappeared from the screen. In that program, when their son Dave got married he stayed within earshot. But the freeways were coming, and people could commute from other neighborhoods. The old attitude of parents was 'What's good enough for us is good enough for our children,' but in the late sixties they abandoned this attitude and began pushing their kids to go to college. The schools also pushed people in this direction. People began to think that to survive you had to get a degree. I know I stressed education to the kids around then. 'If you want to be a bum, you can always do that,' I told them. 'But with an education you can also choose to be a doctor.' "

I asked whom he preferred in the Presidential race.

"Most likely, I'll vote for Mondale," he said. "But I would have preferred Hart. The Democrats have allowed the special interests to go too far."

"THERE are some things that I like about Reagan and some that I don't," Gina's brother Harry Bellacchio told me a week before the election, when I met with him, his wife, Pat, and Gina and Bill for dinner at Tom Foolery, a combined restaurant, discothèque, and video arcade that Gina and Bill had once frequented. Harry was a plump man of thirty-nine with gentle brown eyes, and he was wearing bluejeans and a dark-blue shirt with vertical pleats around the shoulders. Pat—his second wife—had large eyes and punk-style short hair with a small, two-inch tail at the back, and was wearing bluejeans and a soft-pink sweater. Gina had told me that she had spoken to Harry a few weeks before and that he was a rock-solid supporter of Mondale, because he despised Reagan's anti-unionism. "The country is in a better mood," Harry continued. "My son, who's in the Army, sees that. He gets more respect. There's more pride in the country. The person on the street feels that the United States can do great things again."



As Harry spoke, in measured, punditlike tones, Gina's face assumed a theatrical look of surprise and disgust.

"The only part that scares me is Latin America," he went on. "I don't think we should support dictators just because they're anti-Communist. You know—regimes that torture people and make them disappear. That's not the American way. And I don't like the Contra war. Reagan is a union-buster, but otherwise I like his economic policy. Inflation is down."

"Mondale wants to tax the upper tax bracket, but I don't think he can," Bill said. "It's never been done. Money runs the country."

"Which candidate do you prefer?" I asked.

"If you say Reagan, I'll hit you," Gina told him.

"Maybe Mondale," Harry said, with a sidelong glance at Gina. "Well, actually, maybe Reagan, I guess."

"I can't believe this," Gina said. "I'll bet all those polls showing Reagan winning in a landslide got to you."

"Oh, no," said Harry. "What changed was the economic atmosphere. This and the fact that second-term Presidents can be more effective. Also the fact that the country feels better about itself after the malaise of the Carter Administration."

"Mondale just sees everything as wrong, and wants to raise taxes and make people feel crappy," Bill said.

“I thought my sister the Yuppie would be voting Republican,” Harry said.

“No way,” said Gina.

“JEAN and I have a life plan,” Gina’s brother Art Bellacchio said, in a slow, calm voice. “The first stage was to raise our family, and we’ve done that. Charlie will graduate from the university next spring, and Vince is just going into the Air Force. Our second stage was to buy a house that’s comfortable and that has some class, and now we’ve done that.” Art gestured around him at his living room, which was furnished partly with pieces that were antique in style but were obviously newly made. His large two-story house, in a Cape Cod style—meaning clapboard walls with a shingled roof—was one of many in the same style in an expensive development a few miles west of the city limits. Constructed along newly built curving roads, the houses of the development offered views of one another, at close range. Art was a large man with heavy features and a slow, benign manner. His business card, which he had handed me when I arrived at his house, in the company of Gina and Bill, announced him to be the director of operations for a Datsun dealer and was made of brass and weighed about as much as a half-dollar. He wore gray slacks and a loose white shirt hanging out at the waist, Hawaiian style. “This is our dream house,” he continued. “But we haven’t completed the plan. The plan will be complete when I retire, at age fifty-five. Now I’m forty-two.”

His wife, Jean, who was sitting across from him, nodded in agreement. She was thin and nervous-looking, with a friendly twinkle in her eye. “I’ve come a long way,” she said. “I grew up in northern Michigan, in a shack with no electricity or running water. The shack was at the top of a hill, and we moved it to the bottom. We had chickens running all over the place. I learned to drive in the fields around the shack. Once, when I was driving along, I went right into an old house foundation. Boom! One second it was fields, grass, and sky all around. The next second it was dirt two inches away from my nose. My father did a little bit of everything. He was a very resourceful man.”

“He was,” Art said. “Jean and I married when I was nineteen and she was eighteen. I used to go out with her dad and cut down disused power

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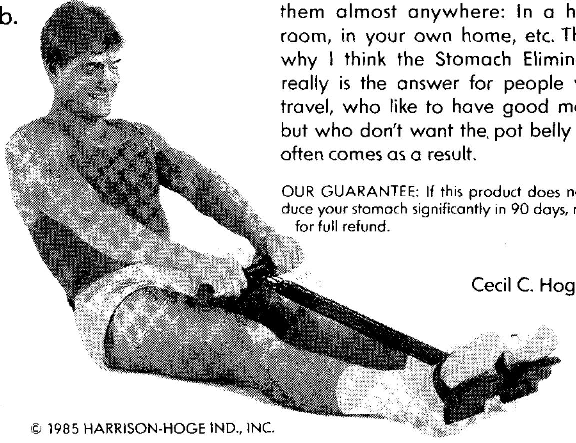

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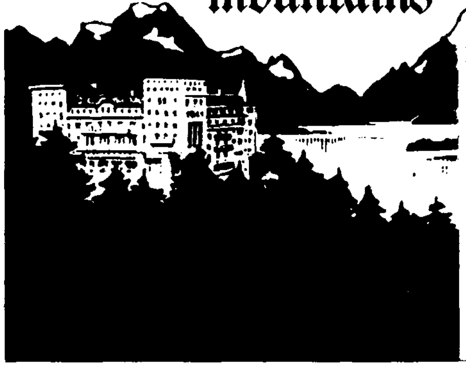

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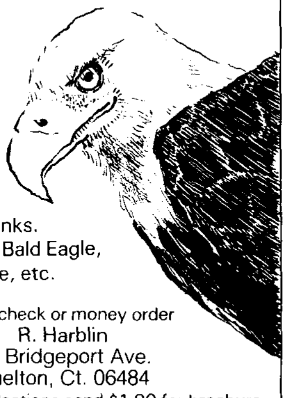


lines, burn off the rubber, and sell the wire."

"We're loners," Jean said. "We worked hard."

"We didn't go to the movies or out to dinner," Art said. "We rarely had friends for dinner. We worked different shifts—while one was working, the other took care of the kids. One thing I know is: Always stay close to your family. If you fall out with them, what have you got? Our grandparents were poor economically, yet they were rich. They devoted themselves to their family."

I asked Art whom he favored in the election.

"I know which way I'm leaning," he said. "Things are going so well now it's hard not to go with the guy who is doing the winning, but I have a great distaste for this federal deficit. We owe an awful lot of money as a country—it's not just a ham sandwich. What makes sense to me is to pay back your debts a little at a time, and not have to pay the piper later. So that's why I'm leaning toward Mondale. I'm willing to pay more taxes to pay off the deficit."

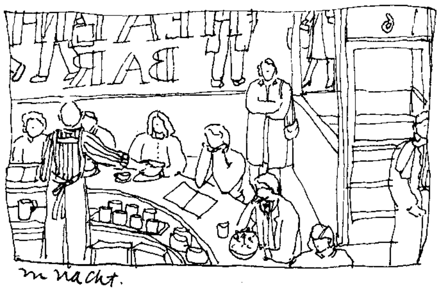
Art took me on a tour of the house. All the furnishings and appliances were new and shining. When we reached the upstairs bathroom, which Art had saved for last, he said, "I want to show you something special." He drew my attention to the faucet in the bathtub, which was golden and was shaped like a swan's downward-curving neck. Looking at it, he said, "An uneducated person like me could not have achieved everything I've achieved without the help of a wonderful woman. Jean is the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me. The way she grew up, I wanted her to have the finest available. I owe everything to her. This faucet is gold-plated. Guess how much it cost."

"How much?"

"Twelve hundred dollars." He smiled contentedly. "As for me, though, I prefer a shower."

WHEREVER I went in Milwaukee, I talked to people about politics, but I found little evidence that people talked about politics among themselves. The day after the Mondale-Reagan debate, none of the salesmen that Bill worked with in the supermarkets brought the subject up. Nor did many people seem to discuss politics within their families. Family members very often did not know how other family members were voting. Gina had thought that Harry would vote Democratic and that Art would vote Republican, but just the reverse seemed to be the case, and Harry had mistakenly thought that his "Yuppie" sister meant to vote Republican. Even Fred Skoretsky, who took a lively interest in politics, was surprised to learn that his wife had voted for Reagan in the 1980 election. Friends were not necessarily better informed about one another's views. Gina regarded Paul and Betty Toruncyk as quintessential highly educated young Democrats when in fact they were leaning toward Reagan.

If this lack of discussion reflected lack of interest, it also reflected, I felt, fear of dissension. Often, other people's political views were not merely unsought but actively avoided, or held secret. On occasion, I heard a political discussion begin only to be abruptly dropped when it became clear that there was disagreement among the participants. Once, at a family gathering at Gina and Bill's house, the conversation turned, at my instigation, to the election, and one cousin, who worked in a car factory, expressed the view that only two categories of people voted Republican—either "the very rich, who are going to profit, or the very stupid, who don't know any better." After he had said this three or four times, another cousin's husband, who was a business executive, replied testily that this view displayed an ignorance of how Reagan's policies were helping the economy, by providing incentives for business to expand. A silence fell, and the subject was dropped. Those present seemed to feel that the gulf between the two views was too wide to be bridged, or even further exposed, without a serious quarrel, which might ruin the occasion. Often, I felt that in their conversations people were ready to go to great lengths to avoid dispute. Sensing that the realm of political views could be a battlefield, they shunned it. It was never quite clear, therefore, when people were steering clear of political discussions whether they did so because they were bored with politics or because they were afraid of it, or both. Gina and Bill were the great exceptions. They not only were unafraid of political disagreement but seemed to enjoy it. Yet they rarely discussed politics, they told me, when I wasn't asking them to.



Spontaneous political discussions were only one of many things that were notable by their absence in my conversations in Milwaukee. Bill and Gina were the grandchildren of immigrants from Poland and Italy, but neither of them ever mentioned either of these countries or seemed to be influenced by their national traditions. Once, when Gina saw a documentary about the Solidarity movement in Poland, she was amazed. "They all looked like Bill," she said to me. Nor did anyone else I met seem to attach importance to his or her ethnic past. Milwaukee has one of the most unusual political histories of any city in America. For thirty-eight years between 1910 and 1960, it was run by the Socialist Party, whose roots went back to immigrants from Germany who had participated in the revolution of 1848 there. But no voter I met ever mentioned this piece of history. With the exception of Kate and Pete, no one mentioned that his or her political views had been influenced by a book. And, again with the exception of Kate and Pete, no one mentioned being influenced by anything read in a magazine.

Mrs. Barbara Gapolinsky, the mother of Bill, Kate, Paula, the elder daughter, and Fred, the elder son, met me at the door of her brick-and aluminum-clad two-story house on the north side of Milwaukee. It was late afternoon, and a pale-tea-colored sunlight bathed the street, which was empty of people. There was no sound. Several blocks away, at an intersection, I saw an occasional car pass. Mrs. Gapolinsky was a tall strong-looking woman with bouffant gray hair and Bill's wide, strong mouth. She was wearing a gray wool pants suit and squarish silver earrings. She invited me in to sit down in her immaculate living room, which was crowded with knickknacks. I asked her to tell me about the neighborhood when she and her husband, Thomas, had moved into it.

"Oh, it was beautiful! Beautiful!" she exclaimed with a clap of her hands. Her voice was confident and loud. Like other members of the family, she loved to talk, and she was capable of making fun of this penchant. She had told Bill that once when she was talking on the telephone to her best friend, Marge Peplinsky, she had heard a strange droning sound on the line. "Marge!" she had shouted. "Are you there? Are you asleep?" "Yes, I was," Marge had said after a few moments. "You were just so boring." Mrs. Gapolinsky had gone into gales of laughter when she told the story. Now she was saying, "We had a regular League of Nations—Polish, German, Bohemian, Irish. In a two-block area, we counted fifty-two children once. There were about eight couples who became special friends of ours. Such friends they were! On New Year's Eve, instead of going out we'd have a round-robin: we'd visit one another's houses, and have a drink at each one, and by the time you got to the eighth house, I tell you . . ." Mrs. Gapolinsky laughed heartily. "But nobody had to drive a car, so it was all right. We had a lot of barbecues, too. One couple would bring the steaks, another would bring the salad, and another the dessert. Oh, the steaks! The steaks! And then when I think of all the sewing I did. I sewed most of the children's clothes. And the baking. How I loved to bake! You know, that's what women used to do in those days. I loved it. Things are different now, though. I'm not even sure it would pay. I don't bake or sew much anymore. With the family gone, my heart isn't in it."

A photograph on the wall showed her husband and another man shaking hands. It was inscribed "Thank you, Thomas," and was signed. "That's the president of the Pabst brewery, where Thomas worked for thirty years," Mrs. Gapolinsky explained. "They gave him a watch after twenty-five years with the company. He liked the work. He was on the third shift—he left for work at eleven o'clock at night and got back at seven-thirty in the morning. He never went to work without my saying goodbye to him—except once, when I went to bed at nine-thirty. The next morning, he told me, 'Oh, was that lonesome going to work without you.' In the last year of his life, unbeknownst to me, he made plans to get onto the morning shift. He told Kate but not me. He liked surprises. He *would* be the stinker to say one night, 'Tomorrow, you have to get up at six o'clock to cook my breakfast.' But it wasn't to be. He died the month before it could happen."

With his death, the brimming tide of life that had filled her days suddenly withdrew. In that year, all the children left the house, and she was there alone. "It was my husband and wall-to-wall children and their friends at one moment, and then it was nothing," she told me. When her home emptied, she noticed that something similar had been happening, although more slowly, to the whole neighborhood. The veterans of the Second World War and their wives who had settled in the neighborhood and brought up their children there had tended to be close in age. Now the children had grown up and were leaving, and the parents were growing old together. Some were sick, some had left, some had divorced, and the rest lived in twos or alone in the houses in which they had raised their families. The boisterous, youthful neighborhood, with its young, gregarious couples and its new houses and its mobs of children, was now a silent, sedate, elderly one. "Sue Krauss, down the block, has a girl six and a boy four, but I wonder whom they have to play with," Mrs. Gapolinsky remarked. "None of the kids who grew up here are still here. Well, there's Charlene Malzuchi. She got divorced and has moved back in with her parents."

I asked if the people in the neighborhood took a strong interest in politics.

"They don't discuss it much," Mrs. Gapolinsky said. "We don't discuss it much in the family, either. In fact, I was astounded the other day when I was talking to my older sister and she said that one of my brothers is a Republican."

I asked her whom she thought she would vote for.

"I'll vote for Mondale," she said.

I asked why.

"Oh, I don't know. Primarily because Reagan is a Republican, I guess."

"What picture do you have of the Republicans?"

"I really couldn't say. The fact is, we've just been Democrats. I just vote Democrat. If my husband were here, he could get into a discussion with you."

I remarked that Bill was voting Republican, and asked what she thought her husband might have thought of that.

"He'd say that that was Bill's

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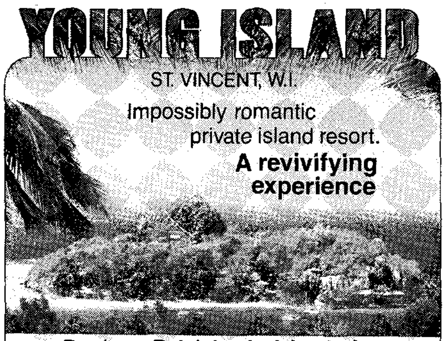

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choice. Just the way when Paula planned to marry outside the Catholic Church—marry Richard Mueller—Thomas accepted it. 'As long as she's happy,' he said."

I asked her how she spent her time these days.

"I'm very busy," she said. "Every morning, first thing, Marge Peplinsky gives me a call, and we chat. I've known her for thirty-five years. She's just checking to make sure that nothing happened during the night. She's got a new grandson. I hear all about every little cute thing he's done." She sighed, smiling. "But I have to listen, because when Thomas died, oh, boy, was I on that phone. And did the neighbors have to listen—and my children, too. Then I look at the paper. Sometimes, on Sunday morning, a friend will call around ten-thirty and I'll still be reading the paper, and I'll be a little embarrassed. And my friend will say, 'Barbara, don't feel guilty. Remember, you deserve it. After the work you've done in your life.' That's what we say to one another: we deserve it. I never miss the travel section. Thomas and I often used to go on trips. What he loved most was to drive through small towns. He adored stopping and talking to farmers—about the problems, the machinery. Small towns seem so peaceful. Let me tell you what I love to do now. I go to the drawer where I keep the maps of all the trips that Thomas and I went on. I get them out. Then I sit myself down, and I go over the routes we took, and I remember all the places we stayed—what we ate, what we did, whom we met. And sometimes I get out the books of family pictures. I'll have a good cry. At night, I often watch TV. The kids surprised me by chipping in to get me a big color set for Christmas when my old one broke down. I like 'Dynasty,' 'Knots Landing,' 'Dallas,' and movies. I don't like the programs if they get too violent, especially not at night. When there's a wind, the walls creak and the door rattles. Sometimes it's frightening being at home alone. Occasionally, the grandchildren come over. Once a month, there is a canasta night here in the neighborhood. The other day, I went with my sister to Lake Geneva to see the migrating geese and the fall colors. I go to a lot of rummage sales, and sales at department stores, too. Yesterday, I bought two coats for Bill—London Fogs they were. Originally, they were seventy-five dollars. Then they were marked down to sixty. Then they reduced that by half, to thirty, and then they took off seven dollars more. I couldn't resist. And then there's so much to do in the house. It's a good thing you came today, because tomorrow I'm going to start moving things so I can paint the living room. And the drapes upstairs need to be done. And then there's Thanksgiving coming. By the end of November, I'm going to be a very tired woman."

I VISITED Mrs. Martha Bellacchio, the mother of Art, Harry, Louise, and Gina, the day after my visit with Mrs. Gapolinsky. She lived in a small one-bedroom apartment on the second floor of a wooden duplex a few blocks from the St. Mary of Czestochowa School. Louise, who had multiple sclerosis and was confined to a wheelchair, lived across the street, attended by a helper, and Mrs. Bellacchio had chosen her apartment to be near her sick daughter. The neighborhood had not been kept up since it was the thriving center of family life described to me by Lawrence Kenny. The paint on many of the houses—mostly wooden duplexes—was chipped, the asphalt shingles were cracked, the narrow margins of grass between the houses and the street were not carefully mowed or clipped. Here the hypothetical owner of the quintessential Milwaukee house pointed out to me by Mark Goff would have found a lot of work to do. On the way to the apartment, I passed several bars with the look of an earlier era—bars with dark, yellowish interiors, untouched by any gentrifying hand, at whose counters old men stared out at the world, or into their beers, at midday.

"I became more religious after I separated from my husband," Mrs. Bellacchio told me as we sat at her kitchen table. "I felt I needed all that prayer." She had remained devout. On her kitchen wall was a picture of the Last Supper; on her living-room wall was a life-size head of a handsome, long-haired Christ. The apartment was crowded with a multitude of decorative objects, among them a pottery rabbit in a pottery bed, a porcelain mermaid bearing a bowl of fruit, her tail affixed to a plate, and a pair of porcelain horses drawing a carriage bearing a real plant. Also on the kitchen wall was a sign that said "Happiness Is Being a Grandmother." Around the living room were photographs of her children and grandchildren, including one of Gina and Bill on their wedding day. Bill was grinning hugely, Gina was smiling dreamily. As Mrs. Bellacchio remembered it, in her life there hadn't been time to think about politics or much else. Looking back over the years, she saw five decades of unbroken, exhausting labor, performed to fulfill responsibilities to other people—responsibilities that often descended on her unexpectedly and yet were willingly accepted. Now her life was mainly one of visits with her children, conversations with them and with friends on the telephone, visits to doctors, shopping, television, and prayer. When she was about nine, she told me, living in her parents' house, in Springfield, Illinois, she was required to assume household responsibilities, including a good deal of washing and ironing. She remembered ironing sometimes until two in the morning. She left school in the sixth grade. At age twenty, she married her husband, Richard, in Milwaukee, and they moved in with her aunt and uncle, in the Victorian house in which Gina grew up. When her husband left, in 1961, she not only took care of the four children herself but also worked full time, as a salesclerk in the women's-accessories department of Schuster's department store, a few blocks away; it was her first job outside her home. She worked as a salesclerk in department stores—except for one break, of six months, in which she cleaned the showcases at a bakery—for twenty-four years. Then she retired. As her aunt and uncle grew older, they became sick, and care of them fell to her. Her uncle, who was blind in his last years, died at age ninety-four, in 1973.

I asked if she had voted Republican or Democratic over the years.

"I can't remember," she answered.

I asked if she preferred one party to the other.

"Oh, I don't pay any attention to any of them," she said. "I guess I'm just for the people who are needy—especially the elderly who are on Medicare. Hospital costs have gone up so." Mrs. Bellacchio's health was good, but she had suffered minor ailments in recent years, and had visited doctors frequently under the Medicare program. "Now, maybe Reagan has been coming along a little bit in the last two years. He's more convincing. I'm not *against* Mondale, though. But I won't vote. If I do something, I like to feel that I know what I am doing. But I know that I don't know much about politics these days."

I asked if she had ever given any thought to the peril of nuclear weapons.

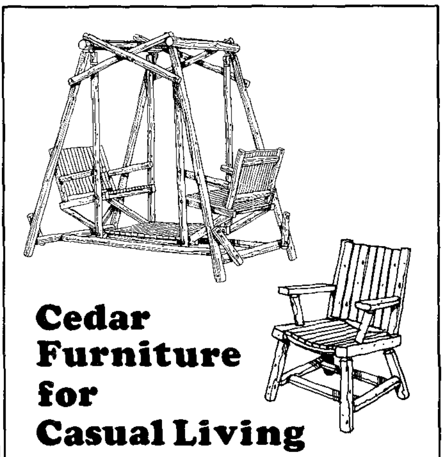
"Oh, I don't think they should even exist," she said. "I think all the countries should get rid of them. It's just a disaster for themselves as well as for everyone else. Everyone just seems to be trying to be more powerful than everyone else, and wipe out more people."

I asked how she occupied her days now.

"I do the rounds," she said. "I go shopping with my sister. I see my children and grandchildren. I watch TV—'The Young and the Restless,' 'General Hospital,' 'Days of Our Lives.' They're all very good. And I go to church. I'll tell you one thing: I don't get up in the morning anymore and say, 'I've got to do *this* today, I've got to do *that*.' Oh, no. Not anymore."

Dusk was falling, and Mrs. Bellacchio turned on some lights in the kitchen. We talked more about the events of her life, and she brought out a black cardboard box of family photographs, and began to take the photographs out one by one, and to comment on each. On a beaming, plump baby: "That's Harry. He was such a wonderful baby. He was hurt real bad when his dad left. He dropped out of school, because he thought he wasn't going to do well in his exams." On a handsome young man with dark wavy hair, a pencil mustache, and a relaxed smile, slung to one side: "That's my ex-husband, Richard. He worked for a while at a lot of jobs. When he became a bartender, the trouble started. He was a man that all the girls gave a second look to." With a short sniffing laugh that seemed to express annoyance, pleasure, and resignation, she went on, "He was stepping out on me, and I couldn't stand for that." On a young couple with prominent noses and solemn, sultry gazes: "That's my aunt and uncle when they were just getting married. They've passed away." On three heavy but graceful young women, with curly hair hanging loosely down their necks, like bunches of dark grapes: "That's me and two of my sisters." On two men—one short and sturdy, with broad pants that did not quite reach his ankles, and the other taller, smiling, smoking a cigar: "That's my dad and my uncle. They were such close friends. My dad's passed away, too." On a young couple standing with ramrod posture, with a look of defiant pride, he in a formal suit of nineteenth-century cut, she in a long gown of white lace: "That's Father's father and his wife in Sicily. They never came here. They're gone, too, of course."

As I walked out into the icy, clear November evening, leaving Mrs. Bellacchio looking at her family photographs, the oldest of them vanishing into yellow or brown, as if time were darkness and were claiming the last traces in memory of these people, just as it had already claimed so many of the people themselves, I found myself thinking about how swiftly things changed or passed away in the piece of American life I had been seeing in Milwaukee. I surprised myself by remembering a passage from the book "Native Realm," a memoir by the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz. "A country or a state should endure longer than an individual," he wrote. "At least this seems to be in keeping with the order of things. Today, however, one is constantly running across survivors of various Atlantises." The Atlantises he had in mind were whole countries and cultures that had sunk under the waves of the man-made catastrophes of European history in the first half of this century. Milwaukee in the years after the Second World War (and before, for that matter) had been unvisited by any such catastrophes; on the contrary, it had enjoyed an unbroken peace and prosperity that were rare for any community in history. Even for a city in the United States, Milwaukee was notable for its stability. I was struck by how many of the people I met there were born there, and how happy they were with life in the city. Yet I felt that, for reasons that had nothing to do with the catastrophes of history but only with quiet and peaceful yet thoroughgoing changes in the way life was lived, the city that had existed only twenty or thirty years ago was an Atlantis that had quietly slipped under the waves. Of course, it's always tempting to regard the past as an ideal time from which the present has fallen away: back then "Our Town;" now the



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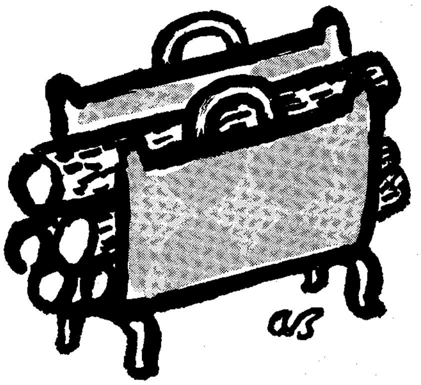
shopping mall. Many of the people I met were dreaming of "the old neighborhood," yet in the old neighborhoods, no doubt, people were dreaming of still older neighborhoods—and in Milwaukee, a city of immigrants and their descendants, they were probably dreaming of the old country. Still, it appeared that centrifugal forces in the city (as no doubt in other cities around the country) had been especially powerful in recent decades. There appeared to be little left of the dense overlapping of stores, offices, places of entertainment, and residences which the notion of "city life" still evokes in our minds. By and large, all those elements had been separated from one another—aggregated in residential communities, compressed into a purely commercial downtown, collected in shopping malls, or scattered in strips along highways—as if a cake had been unbaked and returned to its original ingredients. Ever since I had arrived in Milwaukee, I had been struck by the emptiness of its streets. Each time I entered a new neighborhood, it seemed to me, I saw houses, I saw trees, I saw lawns, I saw cars (mostly stationary), but I saw no people—or, at most, one or two. I wondered whether this might simply be the reaction of someone from New York, where the occupants of ten or twenty or fifty stories periodically pour down into the one story of street level, and where in some places it is hard at lunch hour to keep your foothold on the sidewalk. Also, it was autumn, and people could not be expected to spend much time outside. Yet, thinking of Mrs. Gapolinsky's description of the neighborhood in which she and her husband had brought up their family, it seemed to me that the look of the Milwaukee neighborhoods must have changed; then, surely, more people would have been out and about, and visible to the passerby: some of the fifty-two children would have been in the yards or on the sidewalks, some of the mothers would have been coming and going from their houses. And, of course, there had been vast and documentable changes in American life that would be responsible for such a change in the look of things. The triumph of the automobile had brought about the eclipse of the local store by the shopping center, making it virtually impossible any longer to shop in any way but by car. The automobile had also loosened the tie between home and job, so that commuting to and from the workplace had to be by car, and if the streets were empty of people one reason was that few people any longer walked to the store, or to work. In the same period, women were leaving the home and taking jobs. And as they left their homes and neighborhoods their children had to be cared for elsewhere, in schools or day-care centers. In any case, they were having fewer children, and the size of families was decreasing. With the wife at work, having another child, which had previously meant only having another mouth to feed (a comparatively light economic burden), now meant withdrawing one of the family's breadwinners from the payroll, for many working women still wanted to be at home while their children were in infancy or early childhood. Almost every working woman I spoke to in Sherman Park was enthusiastic about having a job. Whether they considered themselves feminists or not (and most probably would have declined the label), they experienced their move out of the confines of the house, with its cooking, its housework, and its child care, as liberation. They enjoyed the independence, the paycheck, the friends on the job. And in a time when divorce was common many saw their jobs as insurance policies.

As women moved out of the house, the economy, it seemed, was taking over the work that previously had been done there. The clothes that Mrs. Gapolinsky would have sewn at home were now being bought with credit cards by Gina at Gimbels or Zayre, and even some of the meals that Mrs. Gapolinsky would have cooked at home were now being cooked commercially, by McDonald's or Burger King or Pizza Hut. That might account—in part, at least—for the much-mentioned rise of a "service economy." The service economy was the household turned inside out. The empty neighborhood street and the busy shopping mall went together. Seen from the vantage point of today's economy, the households of the nineteen-fifties were like cottage industries, with payment for the wife-worker coming out of the husband's paycheck. Now that tight arrangement had broken up. The wife was out of the house, employed elsewhere, and the work she had done had been standardized and centralized in the economy at large. A parallel development had occurred among old people. A structure of public and private payments—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, life insurance, private retirement plans—had been put in place that gave great numbers of them financial independence from their children, and so the elderly, too, were less likely than before to live with their families. More likely, they lived alone, as Mrs. Gapolinsky and Mrs. Bellacchio did. But precisely because family ties were under stress they seemed to stand out now with all the more clarity and poignance. I thought of Mrs. Gapolinsky submerging her occasional sharp disagreements with her children on how to live so that she would not be cut off from them. I thought of Bill telling a former priest, Dale Olen, whom he had heard lecture that the happiest thing in his life was hugging his wife and children. I thought of Bill with his head on his sister Kate's shoulder watching the Reagan-Mondale debate. I thought of Kate in her history classes, wishing that her uneducated but bookish father could be there with her. I thought of Mrs. Bellacchio's life of service and work. And I thought of Art working all his life to build his dream house so that he could present his wife with the most beautiful bathtub faucet in the world.



In the nineteen-fifties or thereabouts, a stereotypical picture of the American family took hold in the public imagination. In the picture, there was a house, and in the house there was a woman. There were also a man and children, but they came and went: in the morning, the woman sent her children off to school and her husband off to work (having served breakfast to all, and perhaps packed lunch for all); and in the afternoon and in the evening she welcomed them back. To whatever extent that that life actually existed in the United States (and Mrs. Gapolinsky's life doesn't sound dissimilar), it no longer does. It is an Atlantis. There is a new life there, yet no picture of it has taken hold in the public imagination. In the circumstances, each innovation seems like a departure from the old picture, as if in one of those games in which one is asked to tell what is "wrong with this picture" everything were "wrong."

The consequence for politics of this new life, which people now live, though they have not yet quite identified it, would appear to be as yet undetermined. Politics has content, but it also has a texture and a shape. The dissolution of neighborhoods, which, among other things, helped undermine the party machines that thrived in those neighborhoods, is accompanied by a dissolution of political ties. Replacing the ties based on community, as many observers have pointed out, are ties created by the television set. Some of the characteristics of those ties, as observers also have pointed out, are speed of transmission of information and mood; unprecedented breadth of reach; paucity of detail (as compared with what is available in print); a certain "coolness" and neutrality (which is, of course, embodied in law, being required by the fairness doctrine and the equal-time regulations that apply to broadcast media); and a "short attention span." To these, another characteristic might be added: forgetfulness, which is symbolized by the fact that once the image on the screen is replaced by the next one it cannot be retrieved by the viewer. Part of the force of the printed word stems from the fact that in print public events, which are in themselves transient and perishable, are *fixed*—they become part of "the record." (We speak of a "newspaper of record;" no one would dream of speaking of a "television station of record.") Through television, public events are magnified—but within the moment. On television, events expand instantly, vividly, compellingly, pervading all parts of the nation at once, but then they vanish. The tremendous political power of television has been rightly acknowledged. Less acknowledged, perhaps, is a corresponding weakness. Television is powerful because it can dominate the moment—reaching and swaying the millions swiftly. It is weak because it cannot outlast the moment—cannot make an impression that endures. This hidden weakness may account for the political mistake made by those Democrats who believed that the Watergate crisis and the Vietnam War would determine the political orientation of the young generation for life, much as the Depression and the Second World War had done in an earlier generation. Those hopes, of course, were rudely dashed by the election of Ronald Reagan. If it were true that political views were formed enduringly by television, then no event should have been more decisive than Watergate, for no event has ever received more television coverage; suddenly, instead of seeing two-minute clips on the news, the public was watching hour after hour of unbroken coverage. Yet just a decade later it all appeared to have become politically weightless. The Vietnam War was somewhat different. For the majority, it, like Watergate, was a television event—the "living-room war," in Michael Arlen's phrase. But for two minorities—those who passionately opposed the war, and became active in the movement to end it, and those who fought in the war, or were very close to someone who fought in it—Vietnam did become a life-changing event. The disparity in the depth of feeling between the television-watching majority, on the one hand, and the two minorities, on the other, is responsible in good measure for the peculiar pathos of that war, which first made itself felt when soldiers returning from the war found that the country that had sent them there had little interest in them or in their overwhelming experiences.

The world with which politics deals, too, has a shape, and that shape is important for the shape of politics. In a speech at the commencement at Harvard University in 1978, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn spoke of the "pitiless crowbar of events," which wrenches into the lives of those who turn their backs on the realities of the world. In the first half of the century, the pitiless crowbar reached into American life at least twice—in the Depression and in the Second World War. In those catastrophes, millions of people lost their jobs, were driven from their homes, went hungry, or were wounded or killed. In the postwar period, the United States has not experienced such events. The pitiless crowbar has been busily at work in the world—especially in the Third World where poverty, famine, revolution, and war have all been common—but Americans, notwithstanding our considerable social problems and our involvement in the Korean War and the Vietnam War, have, for the most part, been spared. The wars and revolutions and famines have in every sense been "living room" events for

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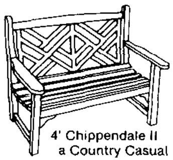

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us. None of this is to say that the issues before us are any less momentous than those of the first half of the century; on the contrary, they are more so, for in the nuclear age more is unquestionably at stake. Nuclear war, however, would be poorly described as a pitiless crowbar. If it comes, it will not pry, crowbarlike, into our lives; it will simply and abruptly end them. And in the meantime—and that meantime has gone on for more than forty years now—it does not come; and not only does it not come but it may well protect us from large-scale conventional war as well. And the freedom from conventional threats, in turn, leaves us secure in the enjoyment of what by world standards is, in the case of a majority of us, immense wealth and comfort. If there is active complicity by the average citizen in the nuclear peril, it may lie in this: we are ready to pay for our comfort and safety by accepting the threat of our annihilation, and of the possible annihilation of mankind. The point in the present context, however, is that the shape of the peril fits into a broader pattern than our political life seems to have assumed. In this as in other respects, the lines that connect the individual citizen to the body politic and, beyond that, to the world at large, appear to have become attenuated. The parties, which in recent decades have served to help people organize their political thinking, seem to play that role less and less, and events themselves have failed to leave deep and lasting political impressions. Nor has television filled the breach: on television, it seems, the world draws closer but matters less. Commentators have spoken of a possible realignment—from the Democratic Party to the Republican. Thinking again, they have wondered whether what is happening may not in fact be de-alignment—a process in which the voters are set adrift from both parties and become independent. It is hard not to notice, however, as the number of those who do not vote at all increases, that what many people have drifted loose from is not just one party or another but politics itself. Each election year, the politicians and others in and around politics and government campaign and, as required by the Constitution, hold elections, and everyone involved gives every sign of believing that the drama is as engrossing to the country as it ever was; but the evidence grows steadily that the public at large is becoming less and less interested. It's said that recently politics is being treated more and more as if it were an entertainment. If so, the performance is a failure. Slightly less than half of the voting-age population does not vote in Presidential elections, and the somewhat more than half who do vote do not live in another country from the nonvoters; there is little indication that anyone who does not have a professional interest in politics in this country takes a very passionate interest in it. Is the American public becoming not so much de-aligned as de-politicized? Are realignment and de-alignment, for both of which the record provides evidence, part of a deeper process of de-politicization? If so, reality itself, by sparing us its ruder shocks for almost half a century, seems to have coöperated. It looks at us from behind the glass wall of the television screen, leaving us free, if we so wish, not to think about it at all—at least until such time as it bursts through the screen and vaporizes us where we sit.

AS the election approached, Bill's flirtation with the idea of voting for Mondale faded. Reagan's performance in the second debate, in which he appeared more in command of his arguments and his facts, reassured Bill that the President was a competent politician after all, and his concurrence with Reagan's views reasserted itself. Gina remained a steadfast supporter of Mondale. Of all the people I talked to in Milwaukee, she was the least divided or wavering in her political views. Although she was not dogmatic or closed-minded, the forces that were eroding or overturning the political ideas of others—changes in economic or social circumstances, changes in political fashion, the magnetism of a political bandwagon—left her unmoved. Her rise in the world brought with it no reappraisal of her views of the poor or of the programs for helping them. The declining fortunes of "tired old liberalism" led to no crisis of doubt in her liberal beliefs. The mood of optimism and good feeling about the state of the country propagated by the Reagan campaign caused no shift in her mood or feelings. Her views, wherever they came from and however she may have arrived at them, seemed the natural and comfortable ones for her, and she showed no inclination to alter them.

Two days before the election, I sat down with Gina and Bill for a last conversation. I asked Bill how important religious faith was to him and whether it influenced his political views.

"Maybe it's not as important as it should be," he said. "Deep down, I believe. But it's just like banning the bomb. I'm too caught up in trying to survive in America, and if I have any spare time I want to spend it with Gina and the kids rather than in church. Talking to Paul Toruncyk threw me off traditional Catholicism a little. In traditional Catholicism, either you're good or you're bad, and if you're good you go to Heaven and if you're bad you go to Hell. Paul said we won't go to Hell for just one bad act—the question is whether you are a good person or not. That made me relax, because I feel that I am a good person."

"If you were more religious, where would that lead?" I asked.

"I'd have more satisfaction with my life. I'd have a morality that tells me how to run my life—what's wrong and what's right. The problem is that some of the things I'm doing in my business life would not be sanctioned by perfect Catholic faith, because I've got to lie a little, I've got to misrepresent the truth a little. In America, any businessman in any kind of competition has to do a little of that. For instance, all the supermarkets want to know how the competing supermarkets are pricing our wares in their sales, so that they can try to undercut them. So if someone at Pick 'n' Save asks me what Kohl's is charging, I'll say, 'I don't know,' even though I do know. Am I lying? Yeah. But it makes it a little easier. If I said, 'I can't tell you, for ethical business reasons,' he might say, 'Oh, yeah? Well, I'm not going to do business with you.' Some will demand to know what the competition is going to charge. But I won't

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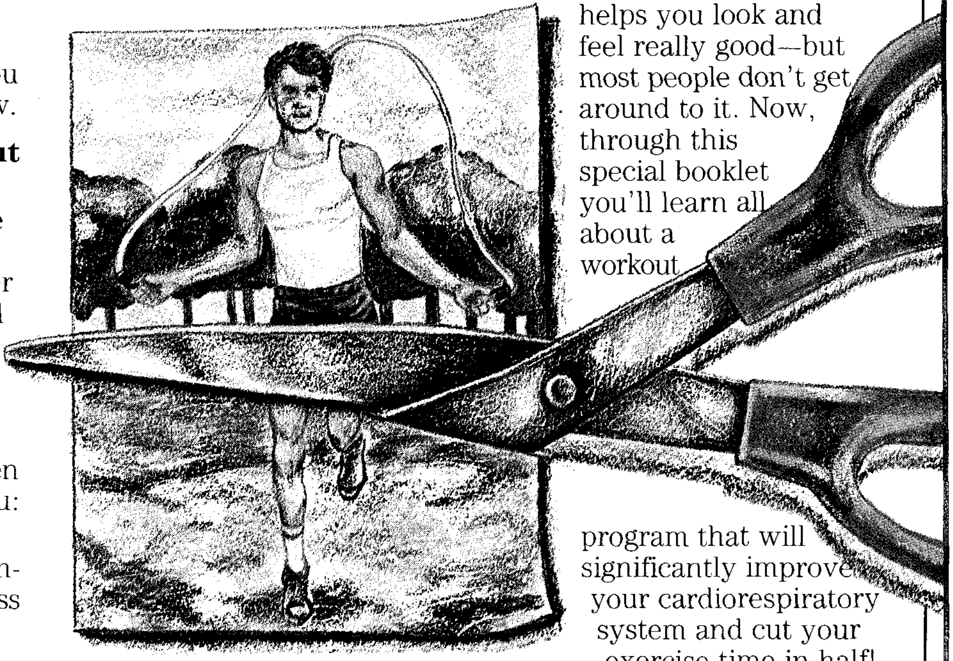

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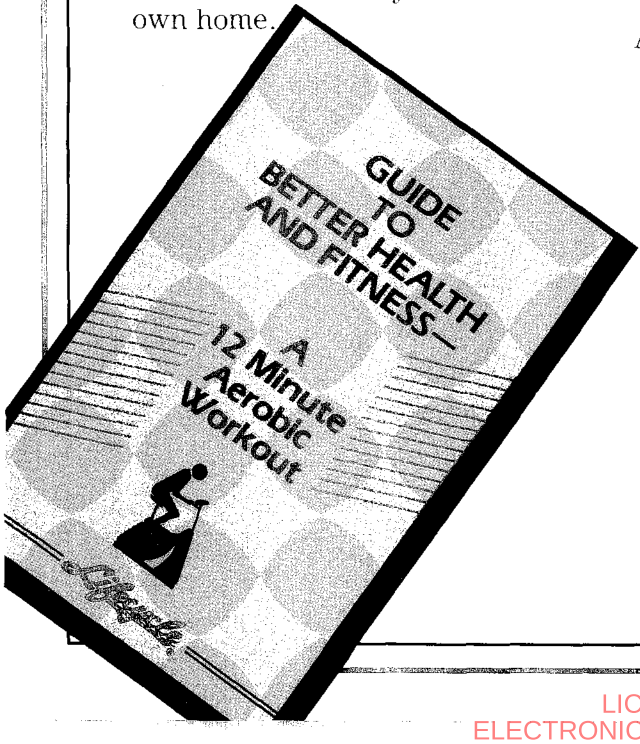
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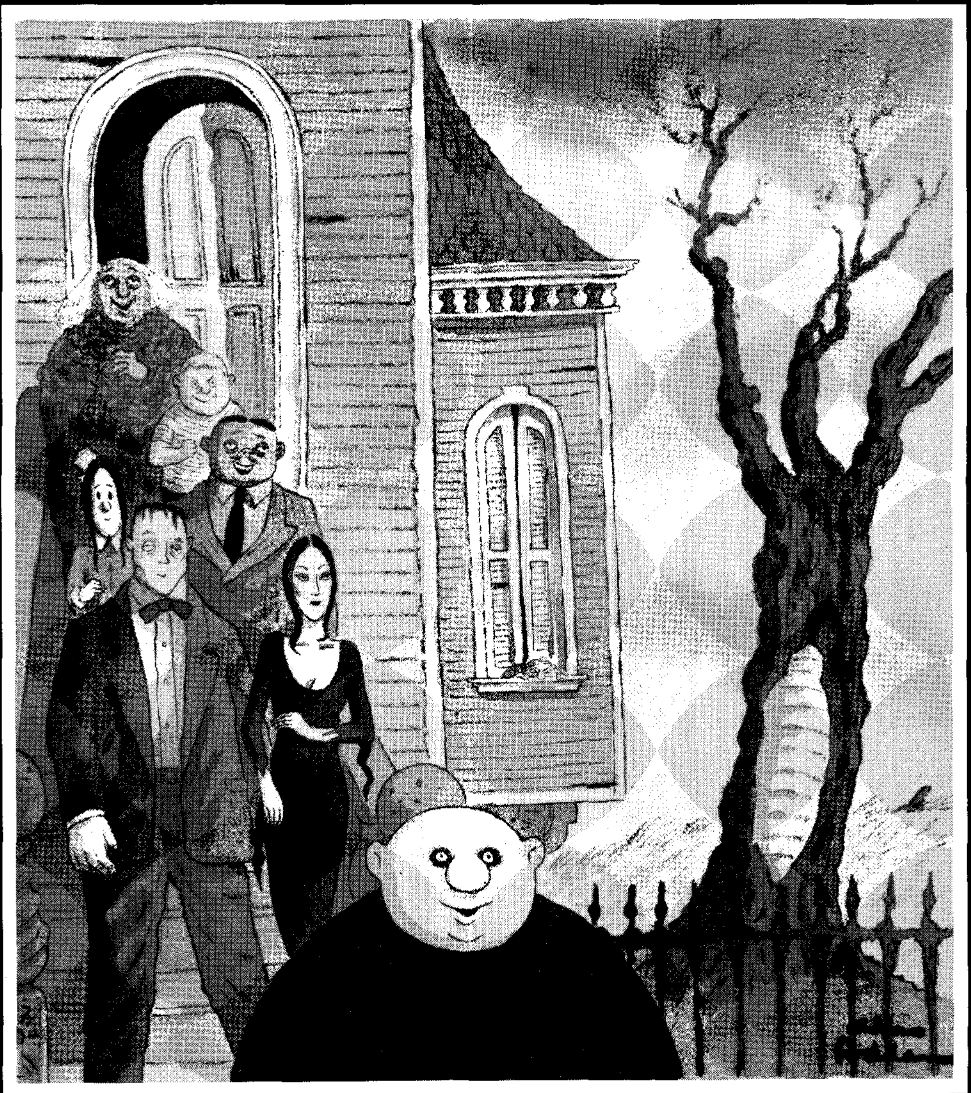

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tell them. The worst I'll do is say I don't know."

I asked Gina about the importance of her faith in her life.

"I hate to say it, but my life has just become too busy, and I've just about forgotten about religion," she said. "I feel like saying I feel guilty about it, but I guess I really don't. I believe in God, but I don't believe in Hell. I don't believe that anybody goes to Hell. I believe that God thinks that people are fallible."

"So we're all cool, and we'll go to Heaven anyway?" Bill asked.

"Well, I don't believe in Hell," Gina said.

"Oh, I do," Bill said. "That's part of the reason I sometimes don't do naughty things."

"Really?" Gina said. "Now, if I don't do bad things it's because I always worry how the other person would feel. *That's* being moral—not because you're afraid you're going to go to Hell. But sometimes I wonder: If there really is a God, why does He let these terrible things happen to people?"

"Just because Adam and Eve screwed up," Bill said. "So maybe you think *this* is our Hell."

"No," Gina answered. "Why does there have to be a Hell at all?"

"Some people are going through Hell right now," Bill said.

"That's true," Gina agreed.

"And you think we're going to escape all that?" Bill asked.

"I don't know. I think everybody may have his own private little Hell." Gina looked glum.

"But you do believe in God?" I asked.

"Oh, *yes*," Gina said firmly. "But I don't think it's as complex as some people like to make out. I think it's quite simple. I really believe in the one Commandment that you should treat other people the way you want to be treated."

"That's not a Commandment, it's the Golden Rule," Bill pointed out.

"Whatever. If you live by that one principle, that pretty much encompasses everything, like cheating, lying, and stealing. It's pretty simple, really."

"And is the rule important for your political views?" I asked.

"Oh, yeah, I think about it a lot. What made me born in the United States? I could have very easily been born in Nicaragua. And how would I feel if a bunch of rich Americans were taking up ninety per cent of the world's wealth and telling me how I should be governed?"

"Oh, sure," Bill said. "The Golden Rule is great—when it's convenient, when it's profitable."

"I always think about how an issue is going to affect the people involved," Gina said.

"O.K.," Bill said, apparently taking her assertion as a challenge. "I just think about how an issue is going to affect *me*." Bill spoke lightly, mischievously. "And do you know what? The *reason* Gina feels she can afford *not* to think about how the issue affects her is because I *do*. It's not that I *want* to be that way; I'd like to be a morally perfect Catholic. But it's only because I am being a good, staunch businessman who can lie a little now and then and rationalize it that Gina can be so liberal and honest. Of *course* I don't want any nuclear arms and I want everyone to be equal and democratic. But if we're going to make more money than other people, and have all the crap we want, I'm going to have to be more aggressive, and be a better salesman. Otherwise, I'd be strong for welfare, and say we're all equal, we're all the same, so let's live exactly the same, and be perfectly nice to each other, whether we're gay or black or whatever."

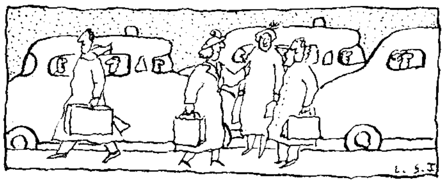
"What's wrong with that?" Gina asked.

"There's nothing wrong with it. But I'm not going to sacrifice myself and let our family fall to a lower income level, because there's somebody right next door ready to stomp on me and take my job."

"Oh, God, don't be *ridiculous!*" Gina cried out.

"How can you deny that? This is America. There's nothing wrong with what I'm saying. The truth is, *you* won't *stand* for having anything less than we have, materially. In fact, you won't even stand for having as much as we already have, because you want more. And if you want more we got to *make* more. Or—*cut out the fat.*" Bill's voice was booming. "I mean, you have to stop buying so many clothes and stuff."

"Bill!" Gina cried out, booming back. "*That* has nothing to do with it. We're having a *political* argument, and my clothes are irrelevant. That's not fair."



"Our spending has everything to do with it. And it should."

Gina was silent.

"You can't argue with that," Bill said. "That's why you're not arguing."

Gina remained silent. After a few moments, she said, "I don't know. Maybe I *can* be a little more idealistic because I feel that he's ultimately responsible for paying the bills, and therefore he has to be more practical."

"You see? You can afford to vote your conscience because I am facing reality for you."

"*Wait* a minute. I shouldn't have agreed with that. It makes sense, but it's not how I feel. It's logical, and it's how *some* women might feel, but not me. I take it back."

"You can't take it back."

"I take it back. The statement is withdrawn. Even if I were taking care of the kids by myself and working full time, I would believe what I now believe. It would just go against my backbone to vote just on the basis of self-interest. It's true that sometimes I think that a vote for Reagan *would* be in our interest. But I just can't even *begin* to think that way. I can't even take the first step."

ON Election Day, President Reagan defeated Walter Mondale by 54,450,603 votes to 37,573,671. In Milwaukee's Fifth District, the vote was 90,027 for Reagan, and 139,057 for Mondale. Mrs. Gapolinsky voted, as she always did, for the Democrat. Mrs. Bellacchio did not vote. Paul Toruncyk, feeling a reawakening of tired old liberalism, voted for Mondale, but his wife, Betty, voted for Reagan. Fred and Elizabeth Skoretsky, still more interested in saving the unborn baby than in banning the bomb, voted for Reagan. Harry, awash in the tide of good feeling about the country, overcame his aversion to the Administration's policy on aid to the Contras and voted for Reagan. Art, changing his mind at the last minute, voted for Reagan. Kate and Pete voted for Mondale. So did Paula and Richard Mueller. Bill's brother, Fred, voted for Reagan. Bill, casting his vote in defense of his family, voted for Reagan. And Gina, still unable to calculate her vote on the basis of her interest, voted for Mondale.

—JONATHAN SCHELL

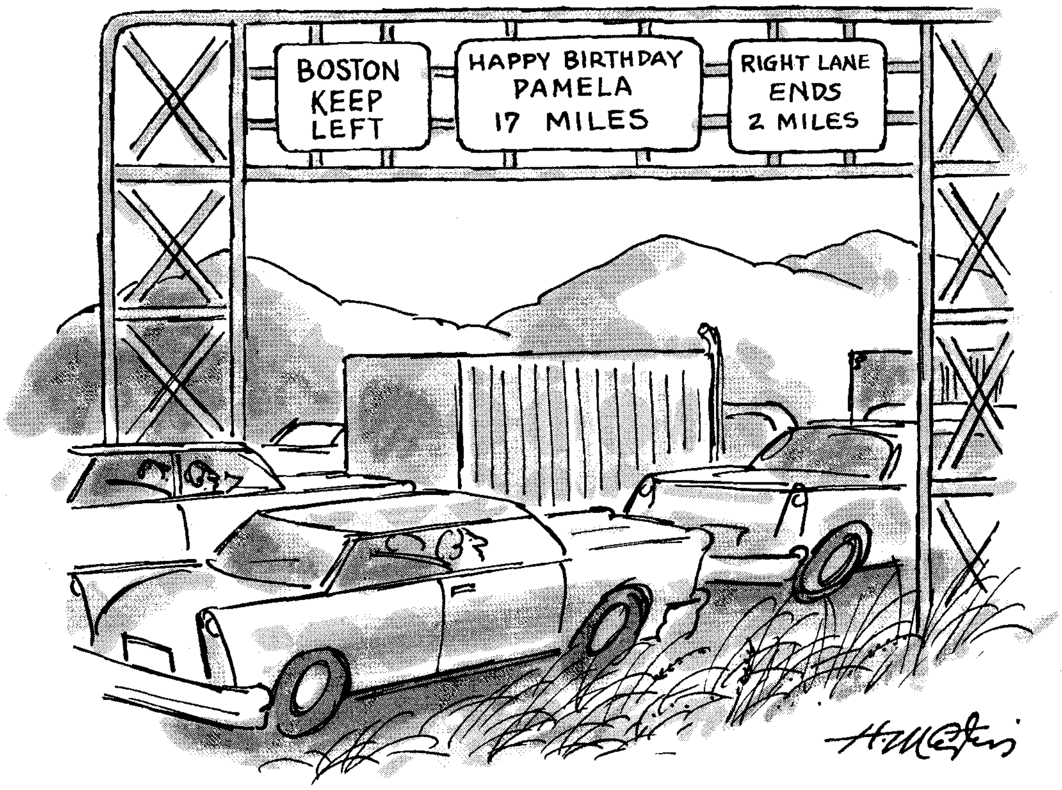
(*This is the second part of a two-part article.*)

JAZZ

Herr Professor

THE dazzling Arkansas pianist Walter Norris passes through New York once or twice a year. He has lived in West Berlin since 1977, and since 1984 has been a guest professor at the Hochschule der Künste, where he teaches piano improvisation. Before that, he was the pianist for the Sender Freies Berlin, a radio studio orchestra. "My friend Rolf Ericson, the Swedish trumpeter, told me about the job with the S.F.B.," he said when he was here not long ago. "I wanted to go back to Europe, where I had been just twice. I knew it would change me and my playing. I knew the job would include improvising as well as playing everything that was put in front of me. I knew the pay was good. I also knew I would have a first-rate concert grand to work on and one of the world's best piano technicians to take care of it. A bad instrument confuses and disorients you. A sensitive instrument brings the music out differently—you can do almost anything. What I didn't know was that I would also have at my disposal a two-metre Bösendorfer and a private, locked room to use it in. Nor did I know that the first year there would be only seventy-nine days of work, leaving the rest of the time for practicing. The work varied constantly. One day, it would be with the full orchestra, and the next with a smaller group with French horns, and the next with the orchestra and a choir. The marvellous thing was that you were physically surrounded by all that music—a luxury that overdubbing has just about eliminated. At the end of 1980, they discontinued the orchestra, and I freelanced around Europe. Then I was asked to teach at the Hochschule, which is a conservatory for the arts. I had forty-two students this year. I gave most of them a private one-hour lesson each week. Then I met with everybody for two two-hour classes, in which the students play for each other and I comment. I was going around the clock. The work almost killed me, but I loved it. I've always tried to work myself to death, just as my mother did before me. I live in the center of town, on the same street as the Hochschule. Berlin is a pleasant place. Everything is new. Everything works. The streets are safe. I was first married in the fifties, and I have remarried. My wife is French and has a Dutch name—Marie-Rose van Deinse–Norris. She's a violinist in the Theater des Westens orchestra. She has two sons, who are both very talented jazz players. It's mostly all work for us, but I play with the two of them when we have time. I used to do my bookings in New York, but it's difficult when you're on the other side of the ocean. A couple of years ago, a man named Bob Schillin called when I was here and asked me if he could be president of the Walter Norris fan club, which he was starting, and I told him he was elected. Eventually, he began to do some booking for me. He lives in New Jersey and doesn't have many contacts with New York clubs, but he perseveres, and things work out."

On this visit, Schillin got Norris into a club on the upper East Side, into a club in Greenwich Village, and into a club in SoHo. The first and last engagements worked out well, but the Greenwich Village job was difficult—although Norris never let on in his playing or his demeanor. The piano was out of tune, particularly in the higher registers, and Norris's bassist had his amplifier turned up. Norris has a delicate, spidery touch, and, caught between the piano and the bass, he sounded like a remote and almost inaudible radio broadcast. But enough of his playing came through. He admires Art Tatum and Bud Powell and Charlie Parker, and he also admires Dinu Lipatti and Vladimir Ashkenazy. His style is light and electric. He likes fast tempos, Art Tatum runs, and staccato, half-time Billie Holiday ritards. He likes to take his left hand off the keyboard and play long, winding, intricate single-note lines with his right hand, sometimes a cappella and sometimes in counterpoint with the bassist. Then he'll drop his right hand into his lap and let his left hand loose. The bassist Red Mitchell, who first heard Norris in California in the mid-fifties, spoke of him the other day. "He is obsessed by music," Mitchell said, "and playing a good instrument is part of that. Your instrument is an extension of your arms and legs. Walter practices with a metronome. He's after perfection. You have to have flawless time when you play with him. There aren't many bassists who at some point don't rush the tempo or slow it down. But if you meet Walter on his level it can be great fun. You don't have to think about one, two, three, four. The time just sits there and never changes. But Walter is not a machine. He is a super,



gentle person, a lifetime friend. I was taken with his soulful touch when I first heard him."

Norris talked about himself before his first set at the Greenwich Village club. He is an imposing figure. Thin and slightly over six feet, he has a large, professorial head. His hair is grayish and receding, and his face is composed of square, flat surfaces, like a late Cézanne landscape. He keeps his eyes narrowed, and he speaks quickly, leaving nice pauses. His voice is high and slatey, and still has its Arkansas edge. "I teach my students the musical rules," he said, "but I do it as we go along, almost indirectly. For assignments, I might ask them to work on a harmonic sequence—say, a ii-V-I progression—and be able to sing all its parts. Or do a Bach two-part invention by playing the right hand and singing the left, then reversing the procedure. Or I might give them rhythmic exercises to be played against a metronome. Or I might ask them to learn a piece in all the keys. I want them to be able to play any interval in a chord and be secure, and I want them to be able to play in any rhythm or at any speed and be secure. Finally, I want them to develop a sense of coloring and dynamics—important refinements that many jazz pianists ignore. Then, after all this, I tell them *not* to think. I ask them when they are improvising to concentrate on their breathing—in-out, in-out—and not on what they are playing. So much improvisation is intuitive. I learned that by listening to street-corner singers in Little Rock when I was a kid. They would scat-sing or cup their hands in front of their mouths and pretend they were trumpets or trombones. They were very good, and they didn't know an A from a C. Maybe they only used three or four notes, but they realized that when they hit a wrong note all they had to do was move up or down a half tone to be in the right place. I tell my students to compare the cave paintings with modern art. The cave painter had the same talent as the modern painter. That talent has always been in us. It simply hadn't been documented much until the last three thousand years. There is every chance that there were musicians and singers in the cave painters' tribe who were just as good as the painters.

"Of course, jazz improvisation is not unique. Improvisation of some sort keeps resurfacing. We know that Bach improvised, and apparently Beethoven was a way-out improviser, a kind of charter Parker-Coltrane. Mendelssohn improvised, and so did Czerny and Chopin. And Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev. And Art Tatum worked things the other way around. The drummer Billy Exiner told me that he heard Tatum get a Chopin étude down letter-perfect in one hour. When I improvise, I let the harmonic vibrations pull me into the harmonic center of each number. I do not think ahead. It's an unnecessary distraction. I have to use my thinking energy for each instant, for what is coming out. It's my belief that every note we have ever played is programmed in our subconscious, and that when we play the subconscious clicks on and notes come out in combinations that we may have used before or that may be close to those combinations. Our task is to alter those patterns and make something new in the instant they hit the ear—or even before. We must play the way Picasso painted—in one continuous improvisatory motion. But eventually improvising has to be regarded as spiritual, as beyond ordinary secular knowledge. I am skeptical about any musician over forty who is not spiritual."

NORRIS settled into his first set with two rich ballads, "The Best Thing for You" and "Never Let Me Go." Both began a cappella and ad lib, then went into tempo. Norris's a-cappella chords were loose and spacious; they seemed to rain on the melody. He did a fast "I Get a Kick Out of You," a digging, sombre "Lover Man," and a fast number of his own, "Spacemaker." He hums a rough melodic counterpoint to what he is playing, and he moves constantly. Sometimes his hand shoots into the air at the end of an arpeggio, and when he goes into a fast tempo he jiggles and shakes and looks as if he might fly apart. He wears heavy aviator glasses, but midway in the set he took them off. He also removed his jacket and loosened his tie, folding the jacket and putting it on the piano next to the music rack—an echo of the way the old showy stride pianists used to fold their coats inside out, so that their sensational custom-made linings would knock their listeners' eyes out. When the set was over, he put his jacket on and straightened his tie. He cleaned his glasses, and ordered a cup of coffee. "Once, in Los Angeles, I went to hear Art Tatum at a club not far from where I was working," he

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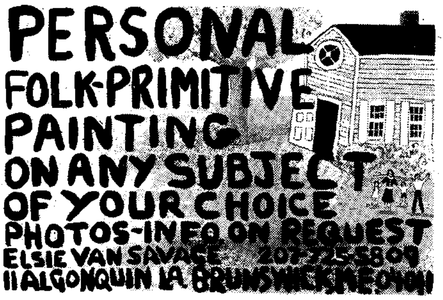
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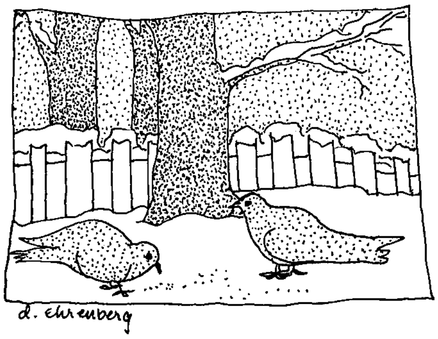
said. "The piano he was playing sounded wonderful. The day after, at a jam session at the same club, I played that piano, and it was horrible. It was out of tune, and the action was unbelievable. I went back that night to hear Tatum, and the piano sounded perfect again. He transcended any piano. His mind went into it and made it sound wonderful. Playing this piano reminds me of what a perfectionist my mother was. She'd stand behind me, and when I made a mistake—*whack!* across my shoulders with a switch. I did progress rapidly, but I already had music in me, and I think I would have progressed anyway.

"I was born in Little Rock on December 27, 1931. On a Sunday. I was an only child who always wished he had brothers and sisters to make up a rhythm section or horn section to play with. My father came from a village in northeast Arkansas called Poughkeepsie. He worked for the Federal Reserve System. He was mild-mannered, and he had a natural understanding of other people's situations. He could always see clearly both sides of a problem. He was not an intellectual, but I think he would have liked to be one. When I was five years old, he began to teach me not to be prejudiced. Little Rock was integrated in the sense that there were white sections and black sections side by side. My father told me that the black people wanted to eat and have a place to live in and raise their children in, just as we did. He said that if black people got hurt the pain was the same as the pain we felt. He said that if something bad happened to a black child the parents felt the same sadness that he and my mother would feel if something bad happened to me. This made great sense to me, and I accepted it. He was always stretching my horizons. When I was older, he'd take me out to lunch at a Greek restaurant or an Italian restaurant or a German restaurant. It gave me a very open feeling about people from other countries. My mother's name was Mary Metcalf. She came from Evening Shade, Arkansas. She was highly energetic: Do more, push, push, push. She was like a racehorse. She played the piano, and started me in at four and a half. I was bad in school. I thought only of music. When I was eight, I heard a boogie-woogie piano player on the radio. I couldn't believe it. I sat down and taught myself boogie-woogie that day. I had thirteen years of classical training. My teacher, John Summers, was a church organist and choirmaster in Little Rock who improvised in the manner of church music. When I was ten, I was asked to join a band. It eventually grew to nineteen pieces. We'd rent an auditorium and give a dance after a football game, and have a packed hall. We even rented the municipal auditorium in Little Rock, and sometimes we travelled two hundred miles to play after a game. The money we made went into subscriptions to *down beat* and *Metronome* and to the purchase of the newest 78s. We had Charlie Parkers and Dizzy Gillespies two or three months after they were released. The band was integrated, and we never had any problem.

"Three months after I graduated from high school, in 1950, I was drafted for the police action in Korea. I ended up in the Air Force sixteen miles behind the lines, where suicide planes sometimes exploded. I tried for two years to get into the service band, but, because of red tape, I never made it. When I got out, I worked in Houston for a great tenor player named Jimmy Ford. In 1953, I went to Los Angeles. It was a golden age in L.A. Before I settled in, though, I heard about a job in Las Vegas. It didn't sound like much, but I went, and it was nine months of paradise. It was in a black club called the El Morocco, which was on an unpaved street on the wrong side of the tracks. I worked in a trio, first as a sideman, then as the leader. The owner of the club was a black man named Oscar Crozier, and he was a marvel. He told us not to honor requests—he'd say to the audience, 'Man, don't bother my musicians.' And when I had to discuss business with him the give-and-take was first-class. The black entertainers on the Strip would come in after work, and so would visiting musicians, and we would play into the next morning. When I got back to Los Angeles, I couldn't believe the amount of music there was—the number of jam sessions. We'd play all Friday night and all Saturday and Saturday night and sometimes through Sunday. We'd go from club to club to club. I'd fall asleep at the keyboard and wake up and wonder what I was playing. This happened every weekend. I was never without work in Los Angeles—the Tiffany, the Haig, the Lighthouse, Zardi's. Two-week engagements in each. And the musicians who were around! Teddy Edwards, Sonny Criss, Lawrence Marable, Leroy Vinnegar, Joe Gordon, Zoot Sims, Herb Geller, Joe Maini, Frank Butler, Jimmy Rowles, Art Tatum, Frank Morgan, Ornette Coleman. I was on Ornette's first recording, 'Something Else!' It was done for Contemporary Records early in 1958. We rehearsed five months, and every time we played Ornette changed his music. When we got to the studio—Don Cherry was on trumpet, Don Payne on bass, and Billy Higgins on drums—Ornette changed everything again, but by this time we were used to it. The session had that good pressure where the music was pulled out of your bones. I'm still happy with that date. The sad side of those years was that so few musicians stayed straight. I had a junkie trio once, and the trouble just to get them started every night! Anyway, I got married in Los Angeles, and we had two children. Then we moved to New York. It was 1960. Very few musicians who come to New York from out of town stay. It's too difficult. They'll stay awhile and go home, come back and go home again, and maybe, if they're good enough and tough enough, come back for good. But I was lucky. I found work right away, and I gigged around until 1963, when I went into the Playboy Club. Kai Winding was the musical director, then Sam Donahue, then me. I worked there eight years, in every sort of musical situation, and I also went to the Manhattan School of Music, where I studied with the great Heida Hermanns. I played so much I developed a muscle spasm in my right forearm. The forearm became as hard as a tabletop, and I couldn't play. I treated it in a whirlpool, and it finally eased. I learned about muscles and playing. I can tell now when it's starting up again. I taught privately after I left the Playboy Club, and in 1974 I joined the Thad Jones–Mel Lewis band. I would rather have worked in that band than in any other band in the world. Thad had written many of the arrangements around his brother Hank, but Hank was generally too busy to show up on Mondays when the band



played, so I would take all those solo spots. In 1976, I got the chance to tour Scandinavia as a soloist, but the tour collapsed, and I was stranded in Stockholm. Red Mitchell was living there, and he saved me. It took me seven months to get back to New York. Charlie Mingus hired me. He had Dannie Richmond on drums and Jack Walrath on trumpet. I knew about Mingus's reputation for physical violence, but I thought he was an angel. We had long talks. He was very pleased that I liked the solo piano album he made. He had been stepped on and scarred most of his life. He wanted to be warm, but instead he'd be violent. I think I generally played beautifully with Mingus, because it was so dangerous. I had heard that he had slammed the keyboard cover on Jaki Byard's fingers. When it came time for my solo, Mingus would say, in that guttural mutter, 'Blow, Norris!' And I *would*. Then Rolf Ericson told me about the S.F.B. job in Berlin."

It was time for Norris's second set. He pushed his coffee cup aside and rubbed his fingers together. "Jazz improvisation is do-it-yourself music," he said. "You create it with your two hands. It's the free American spirit. In classical music, it's do-as-you're-told. And that's generally the European way. New York, in particular, wakes up the musical vibrations in the jazz animal. New York has more energy than any other city I've ever been in. You feel it in the street. You feel it at night. You'd feel it if half the buildings were torn down. I remember that about New York when I'm not here, and it helps sustain me. I would like to establish the jazz program at the Hochschule firmly, then move on to another city, set up a similar nucleus of playing musicians, and move on again. Maybe every four or five years, like a Johnny Appleseed. Jazz should be far more widely accepted in the world than it is. Do you know how many Europeans learn English just so they can take up jazz?"

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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[*From an editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer*]

Where will the escalation end? How much blood will be shed? What peace will it buy? U.S. military planners worry as they work, wondering how to keep the low-intensity lid on. This is supposed to be a screw-turning operation. There is no belly for a quagmire.

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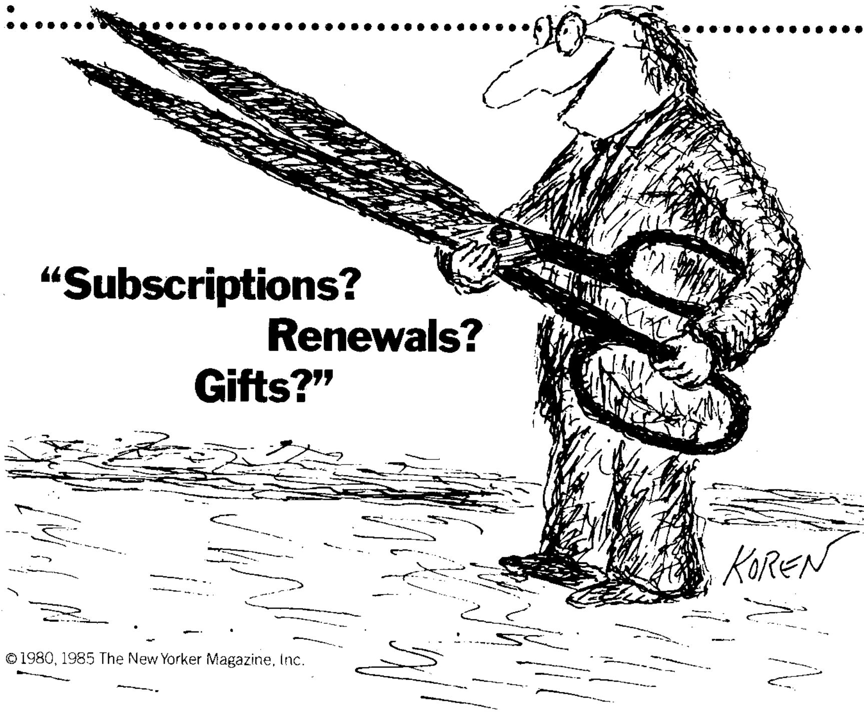
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

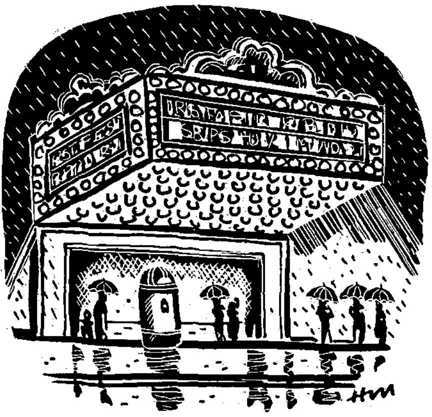
Little Shocks, Big Shocks

"LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS" is jivey, senseless fun. The stupidity is appealing, the way it is in great comic strips. These moviemakers aren't trying to edify us or make us see beauty in the skid-row settings—they're just out to make us feel brainlessly slaphappy gaga. The film is taken from the Off Broadway musical that was based on Roger Corman's 1960 quickie—he is said to have shot it in two days and a night, from a script that Charles Griffith threw together. (Corman's picture didn't originate in a flight of imagination; it came out of sheer expedience—he was offered the set.) It's impossible to guess what made Howard Ashman (words) and Alan Menken (music) think there was the basis for a stage show in this junky travesty of sci-fi genetic-mutation pictures, but they had a historic Pop insight: they understood that the show's appeal would be in its undisguised mental deficiency.

Nothing in the new movie, directed by Frank Oz, is realistic. This is still a stage musical on exaggerated sets with exaggerated people. It takes its period from the date of the Corman movie, and its setting is the downtown-Manhattan skid row of reddish tenements and overstuffed garbage cans, with singing winos curled up in doorways, and vocalizing bag ladies, and a Greek chorus of three cheeky black girls—teen-agers who hang out on the streets, wiggling like chorines and commenting on the action in the Motown-Supremes sound of the period. Smooth and knowing, these lollipops like to view the street action from the corner in front of Mushnik's Flower Shop, but Mushnik (Vincent Gardenia) chases them away, even though there are no customers for them to annoy. Business doesn't pick up until Mushnik's assistant, Seymour (Rick Moranis), puts in the window a strange little flowering cactus, potted in a coffee can, that he bought from an ancient Chinese after a total eclipse of the sun. The plant, which lures customers and changes the fortunes of Mushnik, Seymour, and the shop clerk Audrey (Ellen Greene), is a carnivore, but only Seymour, who takes care of it—and lets it suck blood from his fingertips—knows that. This suggests musical Grand Guignol, but the Guignol aspects are tame. The movie isn't out to horrify you; it uses humor to turn shock into bliss.

Ellen Greene's platinum-blond Audrey arrives for work with a shiner, and in her idea of proper attire for a salesgirl: stiletto heels and the black femme-fatale dress of forties thrillers, with neck scooped low. Her clothes look laminated to her body, which is so frail, narrow-shouldered, and tiny-waisted that you can't believe the fleshy boobs that puff out of her décolletage. She might be a mutation, like the ravenous plant, and Seymour, who adores Audrey, christens his prize specimen—which has a shark mouth, like hers—Audrey II.

Ellen Greene seems to have created the sexpot-waif Audrey out of some dreamy dementia—she's not like any other heroine you can think of. Audrey is so romantic she isn't quite all there. She "dates" a biker-dentist, played by a dark-haired Steve Martin—a sadist who leaves her battered after every encounter. But she pines for considerate Seymour—the gentleman nebbish. (When he's overexcited, she slaps him smartly and lisps, "You're hysterical.") Ellen Greene originated the role, and played it for eighteen months in New York and Los Angeles and six months in London; it has perhaps got overly stylized—it's a little rigid. Frank Oz might have helped to compensate for her familiarity with the part by suggesting the kind of subtlety and nuance that the camera can pick up (and he might have compensated for the general airlessness of the studio-set musical by more fluidity in the production). But this is niggling; in its own broad, blatant terms, the movie works. And Ellen Greene is a weird little wow. Ever since I saw her in Mazursky's 1976 "Next Stop, Greenwich Village," I've been in thrall to her talent. "Thrall" may be the word for it, too, because she seems to wrap a hypnotic state around herself; watching her, you just about enter into it. When she shifts from her mousy little-Audrey manner of speech to her big Broadway singing voice (it's like pent-up passion being released), you're even more transfixed—you don't know where that sound can be coming from.



Greene in her trance-state cocoon gives the movie its peculiar aura. She's an authentically peculiar diva, like Bernadette Peters. With a more conventional ingénue—one who didn't twist knots into the dumb-blonde stereotype—it might collapse. Audrey is oddly valiant, and she's matched up well with Moranis, who's very appealing here. It seems right that when these two look at each other they see their romantic ideals. And though the picture might have gained if the naïveté of their romance, which is fine at the start, had developed, the cartoon characters that don't change are O.K., too. These two are balanced against the much wilder cartoons played by Steve Martin and, in a brief but glorious turn, Bill Murray. Their sequence together is a classic encounter between sadistic dentist and pain-freak patient; when you see it, it's like stumbling on a piece of historic footage, like an encounter between legendary crazies such as Bert Lahr and Joe E. Brown. Martin's dentist is a confident brute until this scene. He plays his status-conscious professional man like a mad satire of Elvis Presley in his concert entrances, when he stalked onstage as if to assault the audience. But when this sadist comes up against Murray, who's even more bughouse than he is, he's undone. And when Murray, in the dentist's chair, climaxes and grabs Martin's shoulder Martin is enraged and disgusted. Furious that the patient enjoyed the pain, he throws him out. It's a piece of transcendent slapstick. Murray plays the masochist so tenderly that through sheer force of imaginative lunacy he's practically the star. (And Martin helps to redeem himself for "Three Amigos!")

At first view, Audrey II is small and rather feminine: it has something creepy yet coquettish and alluring about it. And it seems to have its own light source—it suggests star quality. Seymour talks to plants, of course, and this one answers. It demands "Feed me! Feed me!" and Seymour, suckling it with his blood, shows a screw-loose humility. Audrey II grows quite a bit before it's unmistakably male and or-

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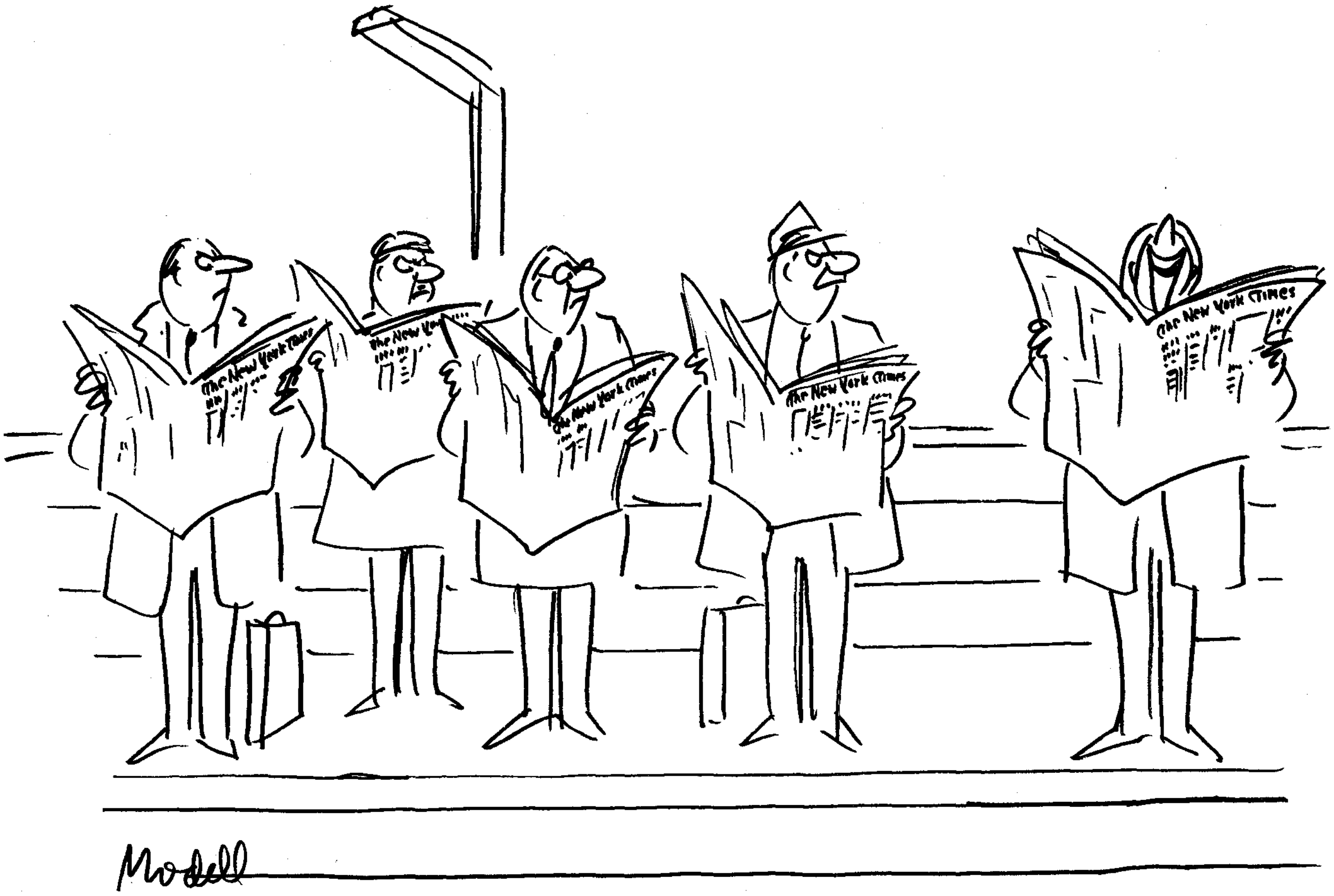
ders Seymour around in the deep, rumbling basso of Levi Stubbs, the lead singer of the Four Tops; it's a threatening big black bopper that sings, "I'm a mean, green mother from outer space." As the plant grows bigger, the joke doesn't, and Audrey II becomes more mechanical-looking. But Stubbs' growl is awesome. And there's at least one neat gag: Audrey II uses a tendril to dial the telephone. And there's a wonderful comic-strip image of Audrey II surrounded by its offshoots, all of them singing, "I'm a mean, green mother."

Oz, the Muppeteer, isn't an experienced or, from the evidence here, an especially talented film director, and you have to be willing to accept a movie that's all smack in front of your face; you might almost be glued to a puppet theatre. But it goes from one plot-advancing smash number to the next, and it has wonderful details. There's a skid-row parody of Busby Berkeley with the street people definitely not in symmetry—they're all askew. And a shot of the dentist seen from inside a patient's full-screen mouth—Steve Martin is like a little devil with his pitchfork tools. The three streetwise teen-agers (Tichina Arnold, Tisha Campbell, Michelle Weeks) wear witty girl-group dresses and girl-group smiles; they prance right into the shop where something awful is happening and slink out again, carefree figures of doom. Comic actors drop in for bits: John Candy is almost terrific as a Wolfman Jack-style radio host; as the first customer to be attracted by little Audrey II in the window, Christopher Guest flashes a bright, sweet smile.

The movie has an elusive midnight-movie feeling to it. It's nothing but blown-up cartoon-style friskiness, and it keeps slugging you. But it makes you feel as inexplicably sappy and contented as a kid used to feel on Sunday morning lying on his stomach reading the funnies. Only, this is bigger, brasher, with its own kind of higgledy-piggledy ecstasy.

Oliver Stone, who wrote and directed "Platoon," based on his own experiences, dropped out of Yale at nineteen, taught Chinese students in Vietnam, did a stint in the merchant marine, and finished a novel (in Mexico), which he couldn't get published. Feeling, he says, that he needed to atone for his life of privilege and his individuality—that he had to be an anonymous common soldier—he enlisted in the Army, and on his twenty-first birthday, in September, 1967, he was on his way back to Vietnam, where he saw action with the 25th Infantry along the Cambodian border. In the next fifteen months, he was wounded twice and decorated twice. He came home, he acknowledges, a freaked-out pothead; at one point, his stockbroker father paid off some people to get him out of jail for marijuana possession. In 1969, he enrolled in the N.Y.U. film school, where he had Martin Scorsese as a teacher and pulled himself together. "Scorsese gave me film as a way to use my energies," he said to Peter Blauner in a recent interview in *New York*. We can surmise that Stone became a grunt in Vietnam to "become a man" and to become a writer. As "Platoon," a coming-of-age film, demonstrates, he went through his rite of passage, but, as "Platoon" also demonstrates, he became a very bad writer—a hype artist. Actually, he had already proved this in his crude scripts for "Midnight Express" and "Scarface." (He was also co-writer of "Conan the Barbarian," "Year of the Dragon," and "8 Million Ways to Die.") Stone has an action writer's special, dubious flair: his scripts have drive—they ram their way forward, jacking up the melodrama to an insane pitch. Luckily, he's a better director than writer.

"Salvador," the early-in-1986 film that Stone directed and co-wrote, had a sensationalistic propulsiveness, and a



hero (James Woods) whose hipster hostility was integral to the film's whole jittery, bad-trip tone. I don't think "Platoon" is nearly as good a movie. Although Stone was born in 1946, this is like a young man's first, autobiographical—and inflated—work. Written in 1976, eight years after his war experiences, the script is swamped by his divided intentions: he's trying to give us an account of what it was like to be an infantryman in Vietnam in 1967-68, and to present this in all its immediacy and craziness, but he's also trying to compose a requiem for that war. The results are overwrought, with too much filtered light, too much poetic license, and too damn much romanticized insanity.

The picture begins with an epigraph from Ecclesiastes ("Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth!"), and then the music, Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" (which was used so chastely in "The Elephant Man"), comes on in a soupy orchestration by Georges Delerue—and the movie is grandiloquent before it even gets rolling. The first images draw us in, though: Charlie Sheen's twenty-one-year-old Chris Taylor—the Oliver Stone character—arrives in the confusion of Vietnam, and the plane that brought him is loaded with body bags for the return trip. Just about everything to do with Chris's initial disorientation, his getting to know the men in the platoon, and the pre-dawn jungle ambush in which he sees the enemy advancing but is paralyzed with fear and can't warn the other men, and then is wounded, has dramatic life in it. So does the small talk. There's a good, if perhaps too eloquent, sequence with the men in a hooch, drinking and doping, listening to rock 'n' roll and dancing; in a psychedelic, homoerotic bit, an older soldier blows pot smoke through a rifle and Chris inhales it—it's like the seductive smoke-through-the-prison-wall in Jean Genet's "Un Chant d'Amour." And there's a fine, scary scene in which the men are attacked in their foxholes and the bursts of fire are like a light show in the middle of a nightmare.

There are scenes unlike any I've seen before, in which we can see the soldiers' frustration, and how they're caught in a revenge fever. Then, when they take a small village suspected of aiding the Vietcong, their rage against the villagers builds in waves and finds release in violence against animals, a helpless grinning idiot, women, children. The film shows Chris taking part in the cruelty and then gaining control of himself, and grasping at first hand what many of us at home watching TV grasped—that whether the Vietnamese won or lost in the fight it was what we were doing to them that was destroying us. The film is about victimizing ourselves as well as others; it's about shame. That's the only way in which it's political; it doesn't deal with what the war was about—it's conceived strictly in terms of what these American infantrymen go through.

"Platoon" has many things to recommend it, but its major characters aren't among them. Chris is a pleasant-faced blank—not the actor, the character—and, regrettably, he narrates the movie by reading aloud the letters he writes home to his grandmother. You might think that Stone would be too hip to add the explanatory emotions this way—particularly after Sheen's father, Martin, recited the tormented, purploid prose that Michael Herr wrote for the narration of "Apocalypse Now." The voice-overs here are perhaps even more stupefying, since they're easier to comprehend. They're populist sentiments reminiscent of the Joad family conversations in "The Grapes of Wrath."

> Well here I am—anonymous alright, with guys nobody really cares about—they come from the end of the line, most of 'em small towns you never heard of—Pulaski, Tennessee, Brandon, Mississippi, Pork Bend, Utah, Wampum, Pennsylvania. Two years high school's about it, maybe if they're lucky, a job waiting for 'em back in a factory, but most of 'em got nothing, they're poor, they're the unwanted.... They're the best I've ever seen grandma, the heart and soul—maybe I've finally found it way down here in the mud—maybe from down here I can start up again and be something I can be proud of, without having to fake it, be a fake human being. Maybe I can see something I don't yet see, learn something I don't yet know.

It's like some terrible regression. Stone's gone back to being a literary preppy.

He's thinking like a preppy, too. Chris finds two authority figures in the platoon: the two sergeants, who were once friends, and are personifications of good and evil. Willem Dafoe's Sergeant Elias is a supersensitive hippie pothead, who cares about the men—he's a veteran fighter who's kept his soul. Tom Berenger's Sergeant Barnes is a kickass boozer—a psycho, whose scarred, dead-eyed face suggests the spirit of war, or the figure of Death in a medieval morality play. The movie is about the miseries of Nam, but it's also about the tensions that develop between the factions in the platoon who line up with one or the other—Love or Hate, Life or Death, Christ or the Devil. And it's about Chris's learning—and, worse, telling us—that "we weren't fighting the enemy; we were fighting ourselves," and, yes, that he feels "like the child of Barnes and Elias."

This melodramatic shortcut—and Stone's reduction of all the issues of the war to make them fit the tags "good" and "evil"—may make you wonder if he is using filmmaking as a substitute for drugs. (The picture itself, in representing the heads as the good guys, makes a case for the socializing, humanizing qualities of dope; God Himself seems to be on the side of the dopers.) Stone is in such a hurry to get a reaction out of us that he can't bother to create characters with different sides. The two sergeants are posed and photographed to be larger than life, but the roles are underwritten. Dafoe's tough, courageous Elias is like a young Klaus Kinski playing innocent miss, and Berenger's glamorous, scarred-up Barnes, who has been shot seven times but can't be finished off until he wills it, looks as if he were a killing machine carved out of jagged rock, though he moves with a slithering grace. The two are mythic figures out of nowhere—Elias who's high only on drugs and goodness, Barnes who's high on war. The men in the platoon may suddenly be trashed by a line. Round-faced Forest Whitaker, who plays gentle Big Harold, is going along all right until after the atrocities against the villagers, when he has to say, "I'm hurtin' real bad inside." That's the end of his performance.

Stone tries for bigger effects than he earns. When he doesn't destroy things with the voice-over banalities or a square line of dialogue, he may do it with a florid gesture, such as having the Christus, Sergeant Elias, run away from the Vietcong who are firing at him, run toward a departing helicopter, which is his only chance for life, and lift his arms to Heaven. There are too many scenes where you think, It's a bit much. The movie crowds you; it doesn't give you room to have an honest emotion.

You knew you were getting pulp in "Salvador" because it was grungy; here the pulp is presented pedagogically, and it's made classy and medita-

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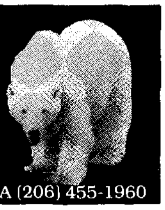

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tive, but it's laid on thick—that idiot gets his head bashed in by Americans trying to wipe the grin off his face. Is it powerful? Sure it is. (This kind of routine played well in the twenties and thirties, too, when the bad guys in Westerns did it, and it wasn't as graphic then.) Stone has talent: he shot this epic in the Philippines on a tight budget—roughly six and a half million dollars. *He's a filmmaker, all right*, but he lacks judgment. Just about everything in "Platoon" is too explicit, and is so heightened that it can numb you and make you feel jaded. You may suspect that at some lowdown level Stone (he appears as the major blown up in his bunker at the end of the film) is against judgment. Elias is supposed to represent true manliness, but if Stone's other films tell us anything—if this film tells us anything—it's that he's temperamentally more on the side of the crazy stud Barnes. The preppy narration extolling the nobility of the common man is worse than a "privileged" boy's guilt—it's a grown man's con.

Stone's moviemaking doesn't suggest that he was a young, idealistic Chris Taylor going to war to find himself in the comradeship of the anonymous but, rather, that he was a romantic loner who sought his manhood in the excitement of violent fantasy. Stone seems to want to get high on war, like Barnes. The key scene in the movie is directed so that *it* passes like a dream. In a remote area, Chris calmly, deliberately shoots a fellow-soldier. There is no suggestion that Chris is an innocent corrupted by having got used to violence. The murder is presented as an unambiguous, justified execution. This oddly weightless pulp revenge fantasy is floating around in Stone's requiem, along with a lot of old-movie tricks.

I know that "Platoon" is being acclaimed for its realism, and I expect to be chastened for being a woman finding fault with a war film. But I've probably seen as much combat as most of the men saying, "This is how war is."

—PAULINE KAEL

•

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Police Log in the Orange Coast (Calif.) Daily Pilot*]

The 76-year-old resident of a home in the 1600 block of Oahu reported that a thief broke into her house Saturday night, tied up her cat with a piece of electrical cord, ate some food and left without stealing anything.

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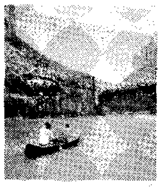

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Images

THE most beautiful lieder singing I have heard this season was Dawn Upshaw's in a recital at the Museum of Modern Art. This was the fifth in a distinguished series of eight chamber-music concerts—Vienna 1900: A Festival of Music—presented by MOMA in collaboration with the 92nd Street Y as a complement to the museum's Vienna 1900 show. Mahler, Schoenberg, Zemlinsky, Berg, and Webern were prominent in the programs; Johann Strauss waltzes arranged by Schoenberg and by Webern and some Lehár operetta numbers afforded moments of light contrast. Arleen Augér, Judith Blegen, Jan DeGaetani, Lucy Shelton, Benita Valente, and Frederica von Stade were among the singers, Yo-Yo Ma, Ursula Oppens, Richard Stoltzman, and the Galimir and LaSalle Quartets among the players. There were good program books, written by Joseph Horowitz, and bilingual text sheets clearly set out. The concerts were later broadcast, on Sundays at midday, by WQXR. In all ways but one—there was no café open to provide conversation and refreshment before and after the concerts—Vienna 1900: A Festival of Music was a thoroughly civilized event.

The high point of Miss Upshaw's performance was Zemlinsky's "Irmelin Rose," the fourth in his Opus 7 group of five songs. Carl Nielsen set the same poem, by Jens Peter Jacobsen, in 1891. Delius set it, in a German translation from the Danish, in 1897. (Nancy Evans has recorded Delius's version.) Zemlinsky's song, which uses a different German translation, appeared a year or two later. Jacobsen (1847-85) is a curious, haunting writer. Musicians knew—and know—him chiefly in German translation: as the poet of Schoenberg's "Gurrelieder," as the novelist on whose "Niels Lyhne" Delius's opera "Fennimore and Gerda" is based. "Irmelin Rose" is a twelve-line poem: four times a long-lined couplet followed by the refrain "Irmelin rose, Irmelin sun, Irmelin all that is lovely." It says little more than that the steel-hearted Princess Irmelin attracted suitors from all over the world and, for one reason or another, found fault with every one of them. Nielsen's setting is playful. Delius's is a miniature evocation of old chivalry. And the refrain of Zemlinsky's—in its gently lilting simplicity, in the play of stressed vowel colors ("i" followed in turn by long "o," closed "o," then "a" and "ö," in "Irmelin Rose, Irmelin Sonne, Irmelin alles was schön war"), and in Miss Upshaw's lovely voicing of it—created an image of ideal beauty that stayed with a listener for days, weeks, while he rode the subway, tapped his typewriter, gazed at the low winter sun, and pondered the various failings that keep aspirant mortals from union with an Ideal.

Miss Upshaw as she sang the first words, "Seht, es war einmal ein König," brought a narrative sparkle into the tone which recalled Elisabeth Schumann's; her upward move on the syllables of "König" has proved unforgettable. Earlier, she had sung Berg's Opus 2. In her utterance of the word "Märchenhand" (hand in a fairy tale), in the third song, there was a sense of wonder; semantic and sonic communications conspired. The poem of this song is by Alfred Mombert. With eerie prescience—the song was composed in 1910—poet and composer seem to picture Mombert's release, as if by a *Märchenhand*, from the camp to which, as a Jew, he was consigned in 1940. In other words, Miss Upshaw and her pianist, James Levine, were not just making sounds: they were creating images that touched and

"*I was a used-car salesman, but I was terrible at it.*"

heightened their listeners' responses to life.

Not everything was on this level. The broadcast—and the modern technology that can capture the fleeting moment and submit it to repeated scrutiny, give it the permanency of a painting—revealed some things less than perfect. The final syllables of the words "Farbenschein" and "überein," in "Irmelin Rose," faded too quickly. But in the MOMA auditorium the spell cast by the poets, the composers, Miss Upshaw, and Mr. Levine was complete. Before the songs, Mr. Levine played Schoenberg's Six Little Piano Pieces, Opus 19, with delicate, distilled passion. The evening began with Webern's piano-quintet movement, an early piece (1907) that each year seems to sound less Brahmsian, more prophetic; it ended with Zemlinsky's Second String Quartet, the work that in the LaSalle Quartet recording, made eight years ago, was many people's introduction to a composer whose greatness Schoenberg proclaimed. These works were played by the LaSalle (with Stefan Litwin the pianist in the Webern): aristocrats of this repertory, whose lyricism, intellectual command, and Léner-like refinement of tone and technical detail make every performance of theirs a shining adventure.

FIVE weeks later, Miss Upshaw, who won the 1985 Naumburg Vocal Competition, gave a Naumburg recital in Alice Tully Hall, with Robert Merfeld as her pianist. She sang songs English, German, French, and Italian. Tully is a large, rather bleak place, which tends to inhibit intimate communication. Miss Upshaw sounded beautiful, but there were fewer moments of keen, special pleasure. (One of them was her rendering of the lines "Die Augen starrten ihm, Die meinen wurden klein," in Mozart's "Der Zauberer," which were vividly pronounced.) Her eyes—a singer's chief medium of expression after her voice—were not well lit. For the French group—Debussy's "Ariettes Oubliées"—she used rather too much voice and too rounded a tone. (I wonder whether she knows Maggie Teyte's Debussy recordings, with words right forward on the lips, and melodies a thread of sparkling silver.) John Harbison's cycle "Mirabai Songs" (1982) needs to be cried more passionately. Mirabai was a sixteenth-century Indian poet who, instead of joining her husband on his funeral pyre, defied convention, devoted herself to Krishna, made yearning, erotic songs, and sang and danced them through the streets. Her imagery—at least in Robert Bly's English translation—seems as direct and modern as Rimma Dalos's in poems that György Kurtág has set. Harbison's music is not as nakedly and fiercely emotional as Kurtág's, but one sensed a wildness in his cycle which Miss Upshaw failed to bring out. She doesn't always think herself into the character who sings. But she does command the lieder singer's gift of being able to tell a story and paint a scene. Her encores, Schubert's "Die Forelle" and Wolf's "Anakreons Grab," showed it as surely as "Irmelin Rose" had done.

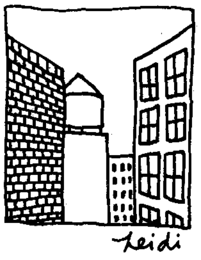
IN Tully Hall two weeks before, the soprano Elly Ameling and the baritone Ruud van der Meer had sung a selection of twenty-six songs from Wolf's Spanish Songbook. They are both of them careful and cultivated artists. Song followed song agreeably, always decently done, without the flares of violence—of proud, glittering eroticism or fervent devotion almost erotic in its intensity—which make the Spanish Songbook memorable. Miss Ameling seemed to be enjoying her task. That's usually a virtue—but not in these songs, where nerves of pain and passion are so close to the surface. The piano contributions of Rudolf Jansen were more vivid. The program book contained texts and translations, but the German was set out in mean, spindly italic type.

A FRICK COLLECTION recital in November was given by the young baritone Kurt Ollmann, with Donald St. Pierre as his pianist. He sang songs German, French, and American. The Frick music room is a small, well-lit place that invites communication. Mr. Ollmann is a careful and cultivated artist who creates characters and scenes. The heart of his recital was Elliott Carter's early Hart Crane setting "Voyage" (1943). It's a great song, richly composed, and more personally emotive than anything else Carter has written. In a program note Carter summarizes Crane's argument: "Since Love is never far from his thoughts and represents the most desirable of conditions . . . the Poet entreats Love to allow him to go safely through an ordeal which will bring him under Love's power." The piano, moving most bars in a flow of steady quarters, in patterns similar but ever-changing, through deep harmonies that span the keyboard (with a passage toward the end of high, transfigured radiance), seems to represent the sea. The vocal line moves through it freely, at once adding another image and interpreting all the imagery. Mr. Ollmann and Mr. St. Pierre's performance was both intelligent and beautiful. It would have been helpful to have the poem printed in the text sheets provided for the recital; Mr. Ollmann's words were clear, but Crane's syntax is not easy to follow. Carter's program note—intended "to help the singer (and possibly the listener) in forming an interpretation of the text"—should have appeared, too; it does lead listeners toward a fuller appreciation of the remarkable song. In fact, the sheets, in admirably legible typescript, provided no texts, only English translations (of Schubert, Liszt, Jacques Leguerney, and Debussy), and the poets were unnamed. Mr. Ollmann also gave moving accounts of two Ives songs, "The Housatonic at Stockbridge" and "The Swimmers," and his encores included Britten's setting of the folk song "The Foggy, Foggy Dew," rendered with charm, wistfulness, and humor. The recital is to be broadcast by WNYC on August 27th, at 8 P.M.

THE Met's new "Fledermaus," based on the Vienna State Opera's, was not much fun. Judith Blegen, the Adele, entered on a burst of astonishingly brilliant, powerful coloratura and then seemed to have little voice left for the rest of the role. Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, the Rosalinde, was unwontedly vivacious in Act I and then lapsed into gracious languor; the lower part of her voice did not carry. Håkan Hagegård, the Eisenstein, always audible, was apt to shout his music. Tatiana Troyanos, the Orlofsky, was in bumpy form and squawked the high notes of the part. David Rendall, the Alfred, sang cleanly, without humor. Michael Devlin, the Falke, was neither here nor there. Franz Mazura, the Frank, was deft. For two acts, it's a big, grand, expensive-looking production (directed by Otto Schenk and designed by Günther Schneider-Siemssen, with abundant costumes by Peter J. Hall). The set revolves in Act II, and that excites the Met audience. Act III, the prison office, is naturally simpler. The music is sung in German. The spoken dialogue, adapted from the original by Mr. Schenk, is delivered, slowly and clearly, in an English translation by Marcel Prawy. Mr. Schenk also plays Frosch. He did the long scene with skill, taking his time about it and omitting none of the standard old gags. A few people, to whom they may have been new, laughed at them. It was a performance fatally lacking in gaiety and high spirits. Jeffrey Tate's liltless conducting did not help. Animation was artificially injected by a ballet in Act II, danced to the "Thunder and Lightning" Polka, throughout which corps and chorus never stopped screaming loudly, to indicate what a good time they were having.

"FIDELIO" was better. Hildegard Behrens remains a shining, affecting heroine. Leonore is probably her best role. Her middle range was less steady and secure than before; years of singing Brünnhilde are perhaps taking a toll. The Florestan was Robert Schunk, a Met débutant—acceptable, strong and burly of tone, not subtle. Marie McLaughlin and Barry McCauley, the Marzelline and the Jaquino, were also making Met débuts. Miss McLaughlin had a great success: her voice rang out fully and easily; her phrasing was lively. Mr. McCauley seemed ill at ease; his playing of the first scene was absurdly overanimated. Siegmund Nimsgern's Pizarro seemed to me, as usual, serious but rather slight. Matthias Hölle's Rocco was boldly voiced but uncertainly acted. It was an evening of separate ingredients—many of them admirable—rather than an integrated, inspired performance of Beethoven's "Fidelio." The spoken dialogue was drastically abridged; there was no preparation for the Act I quartet. (And during it—again that complaint!—the singers' eyes were unlit.) Christof Perick's conducting, slow and heavy during the opening numbers, gained force as a work that starts in comic-opera vein becomes heroic; his account of the intrusive "Leonore" No. 3 was noble.

THE young Finnish composer and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen and the young Russian pianist Andrei Gavrilov, both well known on records, made their Philharmonic débuts last month, in the same concert. Mr. Gavrilov, who won the Tchaikovsky Competition twelve years ago, when he was eighteen, was the soloist in Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto. He has big hands, powerful tones, and uncommon velocity in fortissimo double octaves. There didn't seem to me to be much romance or poetry in his performance, or any feeling for the shape of the work, the relation of one section to another. Mr. Salonen and the orchestra tagged along bravely, endeavoring to match the soloist's high-tech bravura. Henry Wood, in his manual for budding conductors, told them to be sure that they were stationed where they had a clear view of the keyboard when accompanying a piano concerto. Wood used to stand between the piano and the audience, conducting across the lid. Adrian Boult, in a radio talk "Conducting Concertos"—reprinted in "Boult on Music" (Toccata/Universe), a trove of wisdom and common sense about music and its performance—called this "a poisonous position," in which the conductor, hearing only the soloist, might allow the orchestra to "blaze away." He "decided once and for all that Continental and American conductors were right," and stationed himself between the piano and the orchestra. "If one turns sideways, one is wonderfully close to the keyboard, and if one keeps the right hand and arm well out to the right everybody can see the stick." Mr. Salonen turned sideways and looked down at the keyboard only when the ensemble between the soloist and the orchestra showed signs of going astray, and by then it was too late. As an encore, after the concerto, Mr. Gavrilov hammered out a tremendous account of Prokofiev's "Diabolical Inspiration."



Mr. Salonen, who came to prominence when, in 1983, at the age of twenty-five, he deputized for Michael Tilson Thomas in a London performance of Mahler's Third Symphony, is a champion of contemporary music. He has worked with the London Sinfonietta; he has recorded Lutosławski's Third Symphony with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (CBS); before his New York appearance he had been conducting Tippett's Piano Concerto in Philadelphia. His Philharmonic début began with the American première of "Sinfonia con Giardino" (1978), by Niccolò Castiglioni, under whom Salonen studied composition. It's a brief, not at all unattractive, but rather dated, tinklingly decorative piece. It was precisely conducted—the beat excellently clear, every entry neatly cued.

Carl Nielsen's Fourth Symphony, "The Inextinguishable" (1916), ended the concert and revealed Mr. Salonen's merits more clearly. Nielsen's music, like Sibelius's, seems newly modern today to ears sated with Mahler or with minimalism. The sounds—massed violins accompanied only by drums, the sudden solos, the din of warring kettledrums—are moving and extraordinary. Of the Fourth Symphony, Robert Simpson wrote, "The music at once hurls the hearer into the heart of a flaming nebula, from which order is to grow: with explosive violence it plunges *in medias res* with two conflicting streams of fire." Mr. Simpson's "Carl Nielsen: Symphonist" appeared in 1952. When he revised the book twenty-five years later—years during which Nielsen's music had "taken secure root without becoming a vogue"—he found that what he had written "in the first flush of youthful enthusiasm" needed little alteration: the qualities of Nielsen's music had proved "even deeper and rounder than I knew." Because Nielsen has not been the object of a cult, has not been overplayed, each rediscovery can seem like a new discovery. And Mr. Salonen conducted the symphony with a composer's appreciation of the wonderful things that happen.

—ANDREW PORTER

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He said he perhaps should have told the CBC "prices will be higher than they would have been had the legislation not been changed" rather than "prices will rise."

"I believe the minister knows what I mean and I think that I know what he means and I think the confusion arises because of, and I don't think there's any disagreement, but the use of words has led to this kind of confusion," said Eastman.

—*Ottawa Citizen.*

Words are tricky things, Eastman.

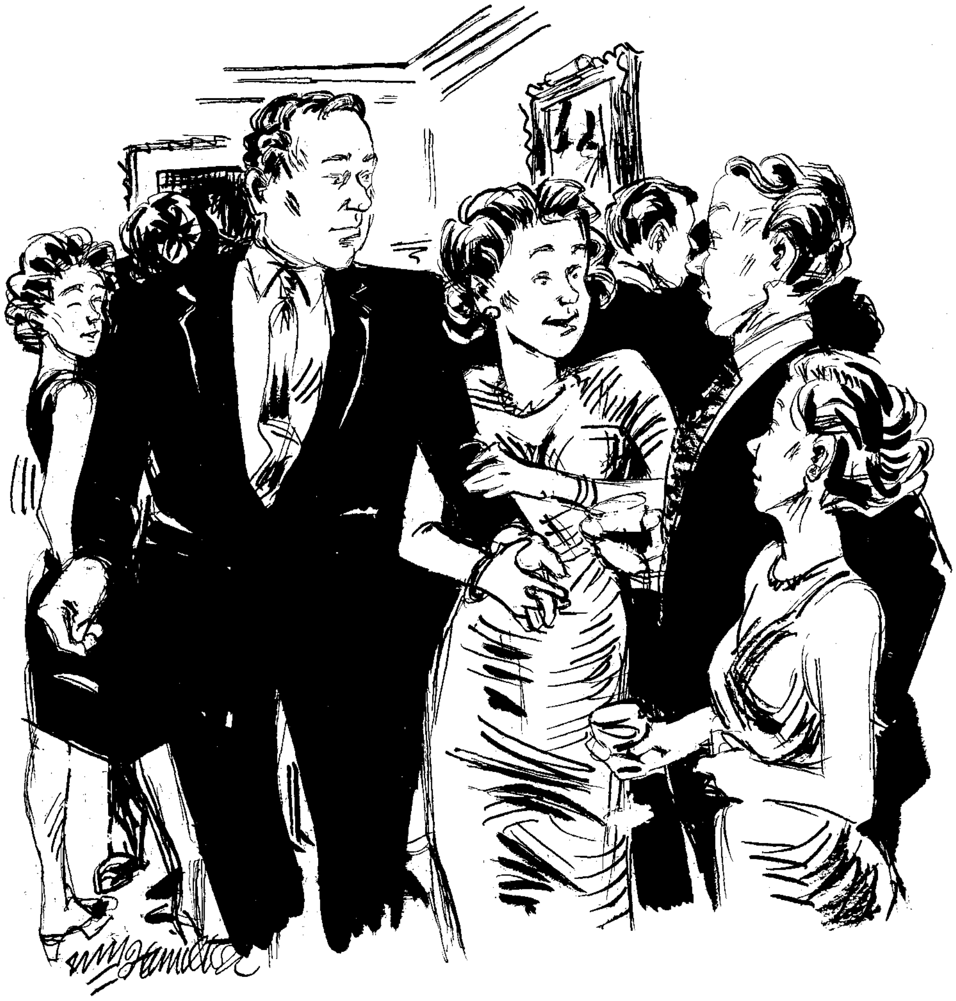
BOOKS

Fond Adieu

SIMONE SIGNORET, the actress, wrote a novel before she died, a year ago, in which she propels a large cast through twenty-five years or so of history with no signs of struggle. "Adieu, Volodya" is the name of the book; it was published in France in 1985 with great success, and was recently issued here by Random House, in a translation by Stanley Hochman ($18.95). Despite a prevailing benevolence in her attitude toward her characters, and a certain naïveté of style, the worldliness that Signoret projected as an actress is evident in her literary manner. Her narrative is set in Paris, in the years between the end of the First World War and the end of the Second—an ominous period, frequently exploited by novelists and screenwriters for its melodramatic possibilities. Signoret, however, works her way through those years with equanimity, focussing mainly on ordinary daily life. Although she takes into account the social and political developments that led to the German occupation of France and to the particular endangerment of French Jews, she makes a point of the diverse and uneven impact of public events on private lives.

"Adieu, Volodya" is an egalitarian novel, featuring seamstresses, factory workers, students, housemaids, actresses, entrepreneurs, lawyers, chauffeurs, a bureaucrat, a scenic designer, a sugar daddy, a bookseller, and a postman, among others—no one a hero or a villain, though some are more prominent than others in the course of the story. As Signoret tells it, in a mellow, omniscient narrator's voice, time passes the way it usually does—or seems to have done, in retrospect. Babies are born, grow, go to school; people shop, work, read the newspapers, move into and out of apartments; sexual activity occurs at what seems to be a normal rate; some people die. More specifically, Jewish immigrants from Poland and the Ukraine become grateful citizens of France; a family garment business evolves into a prosperous theatrical-supply house; a group of childhood friends become adults as France becomes involved in the Second World War. Except in the final section of the book, where she offers a fairly brisk itemization of the effects of the war on various lives, Signoret's method is leisurely and anecdotal. She makes the reader aware of the historical background by means of sporadic news bulletins, casually introduced, and references to the Dreyfus case and "Man's Fate," but her preferred subject is the sentimental and economic life of her characters. Describing their habits, their clothes, their furniture, their conversations, and their thoughts, she moves back and forth among them high-handedly, but is essentially friendly, and sympathetic to their foibles. True, greed, bigotry, suicide, and murder come into it, and political assassinations, a train wreck, and, eventually, the war, but in the lull established so quickly and firmly by the author's magnanimous tone it comes as a shock to encounter a character, albeit minor, whose "large, sluglike body and sharklike head made him resemble one of those sea monsters a heavy tide sometimes deposits on the beach, where it decomposes until the sea returns to reclaim whatever is left of its carcass and deposit it elsewhere." The fellow turns out to be a sadistic sex murderer.

None of the characters is as distinct or well developed as he or she might have been in the hands of someone with less experience as an actress and more as a novelist. To succumb to a culinary figure of speech, they are more like crêpes than croissants, and it may be that Signoret was too easily able to envision them as they would be interpreted by actors. In fact, according to a publicity release, "Adieu, Volodya" has been, is being, or is about to be converted into "a 39-hour mini-series." (Sounds more like a maxi-series.) Signoret may have imagined herself in the part of Nicole, an ambitious beauty who conceals her lowly origins in tales of czarist glamour. Before it is clear that Signoret aims to distribute her attention widely, Nicole seems to be a likely candidate



"Well, here he is. He just grew on me until I couldn't stand it anymore."

for heroine or anti-heroine of the novel. In any case, she provides the occasion for some lively rhetoric. As the hostess of a strategic dinner party, she is apostrophized by her spouse: "Oh my incomparable, my abominable, irreplaceable and adored bitch! Janek thought in Yiddish while Nicole guided the hand of the old lady to whom she had just given an ornamental cake server." In the same episode, the narrator describes her, perhaps with some self-consciousness, as "the lucky author and director," and elaborates: "Her face radiated that indulgent gratitude common to playwrights who know a great deal more about the end results of their work than the actors, who merely play the roles assigned them." Later, Nicole and Janek argue about Hitler—the sequence takes place in 1934—and resolve their differences in a burst of adverbs: "And they made love subtly and skillfully, as they had expertly done for many winters, springs, autumns and summers."

Throughout the novel, Signoret offers examples of deliberate and accidental forgetfulness, beginning with a scene in which the refugees from Eastern Europe take a vow to protect their children from the knowledge of past terrors: "As parents, they would be young amnesiacs . . . They wouldn't be like their parents or grandparents, who had fed them the details of the pogroms of their day by the terrifying light of tallow candles." The Volodya of the title, a victim of both czarist and Communist tyranny, represents a sad memory of dubious value. At the end, Signoret appears to leave open the question of what such memories are worth, but by then the old terrors have merged with new ones, of which "Adieu, Volodya" is a gentle reminder. —SUSAN LARDNER

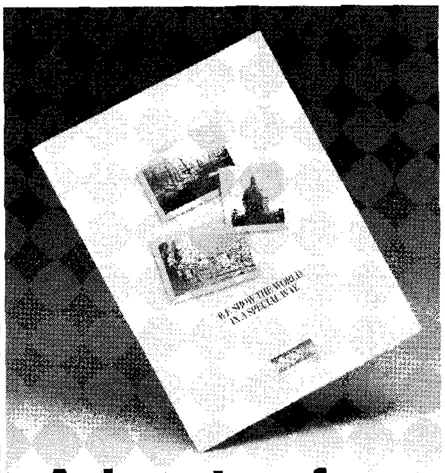
BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, by Ralph McInerny (Atheneum; $14.95). An examination of some only too well-examined Catholic lives in the aftermath of Vatican II. The settings are Minneapolis, Chicago, and, briefly, Rome and Paris. Mr. McInerny follows the emotional fortunes of Andrea and Vera, growing up best friends in Minneapolis, drifting apart when Andrea becomes a nun and Vera studies law and marries, coming together when Andrea leaves the convent; of Vera's niece Katy and a young American seminarian in Rome; of Chuck, a former priest, and Alma, a former nun, who marry. Mr. McInerny is very much a Catholic writer (he teaches at Notre Dame), but he is no proselytizer. He is an interesting ironist, a sometime humorist, and a storyteller capable of easily involving us in a story well out of the common experience.

THE MURDERER, by Georges Simenon, translated from the French by Geoffrey Sainsbury (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $15.95). Another of the several studies in obsession and aberration which Simenon produced obsessively in the years just before the Second World War—perhaps his richest and most inventive period. The setting here is a small town in Holland. Simenon shows us the town's most popular physician—his routines professional, social, and marital. He shows us an anonymous letter that informs the doctor that his wife and the town aristocrat are having an affair, and he shows us the doctor coolly making his response: buying a revolver in Amsterdam, returning home and surprising the lovers in a rendezvous, and killing them. And then, the doctor's guilt being impossible to prove, he shows us the impact of the crime on the doctor, on the writer of the anonymous letter, and on the community as a whole. "The Murderer" is certainly one of the finest and bleakest and most thoughtful of Simenon's psychological novels. It was first published in France in 1937, and this is its first appearance in the United States.

SHALLOWS, by Tim Winton (Atheneum; $14.95). In an epigraph taken from Dryden's poem "Annus Mirabilis," "shallow" is a verb akin to "strain" and "sift," and describes how "huge leviathans" absorb "fry / Which through their gaping jaws mistake the way." But it is whales that do the mistaking, and whalers who (to quote again from the Dryden epigraph) "attend their prey, / And give no chance," in this complex, pessimistic novel set in and off Angelus, an Australian whaling port, in 1978. At the heart of the story is a courageous, impulsive young woman who feels more at ease in salt water than on land, and who tries to sabotage the local industry. Before long, she suspects her husband of spinelessness, as he buries his nose in journals that her



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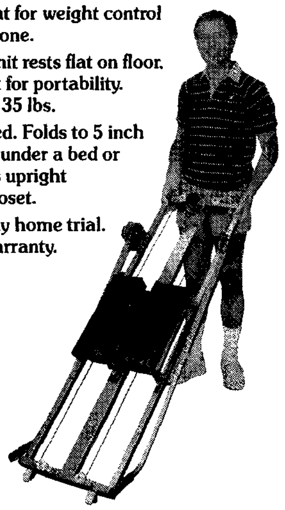
great-grandfather began to keep in 1831, when an American whaling ship beached him in Angelus. Meanwhile, as Angelus gears up for its hundred-and-fiftieth-birthday bash, she is not alone in hoping that the simultaneous appearance of a rainbow and dolphins is a happy portent; but a wise and beleaguered minister, on the verge of retirement, sees only "malevolent calm" from the pulpit. This is Tim Winton's second novel; like his first, "An Open Swimmer" (1981), it has won an award in Australia.

The Beet Queen, by Louise Erdrich (Henry Holt; $16.95). Described on the dust jacket as "A Novel by the Author of 'Love Medicine,' " and subdivided into four parts and sixteen chapters, this is in fact a collection of fragments that do not add up to a novel, or even a full house of short stories. North Dakota is the setting, the beet is a sugar beet (about which little information is offered), and the queen is a local teen-ager (a character from "Love Medicine"), whose family history is Louise Erdrich's subject, if subject is not too pointed a word. So little happens between 1932 and 1972, the period the book covers, that readers are bound to notice the high proportion of lighting, smoking, and putting out of cigarettes by characters with not much else to think about or do.

A Late Chrysanthemum, translated from the Japanese by Lane Dunlop, with etchings by Tanaka Ryohei (North Point; $16.50). Like a lacquer tray of sushi, this sampler of twenty-one Japanese stories, by seven Japanese writers, requires a temporary suspension of Western sensibilities. Shiga Naoya (1883-1971) likens a waitress's flesh to white crabmeat; Ozaki Shiro (1897-1964) likens a teen-ager to a ripening loquat; Yasunari Kawabata (1899-1972) likens "smarmy" love letters to stale bean jam; Shimaki Kensaku (1903-45) likens a ladybug to the Japanese flag. In the title story, by Hayashi Fumiko (1904-51), who is the only woman writer included in the collection, a woman repels an old flame by making her hand "as soft and limp as a silk handkerchief;" then she puts some tobacco in a silver pipe, pours some tea from an iron pot, and likens love to "a fallen leaf drifting in the wind." For Dazai Osamu (1909-



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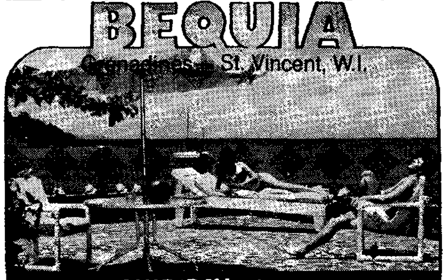

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48), who was a suicide, paper lanterns on a distant winter's night are an image of his fragility and solitude. In a preface and in notes at the back, Lane Dunlop contrasts Kobo Abé (born in 1924) with the six other writers by comparing him with Kafka; but Abé's metamorphoses are only slightly more surreal than those of Shiga's wasp, rat, and lizard, say, or of Shimaki's centipede. Some of Tanaka Ryohei's etchings (one per writer)—a moonlit roofscape, a closeup of a chrysanthemum—are too inky, but others, including a cocoon on a budding branch, are fine.

GENERAL

THE CITY AS A WORK OF ART: LONDON, PARIS, VIENNA, by Donald J. Olsen (Yale; $35). It is the author's thesis, and he makes it seem quite reasonable, that those who planned and built (and rebuilt) these three capitals believed a city's ability to afford pleasure and enrich life—in cafés, theatres, parks, bridle paths and skating rinks, luxury hotels, museums—to be as important as the practical things that make it work. He discusses in detail the remaking of these metropolises: in London, the urban renewal that was started under the Regency and was not completed until 1900; in Paris, Baron Haussmann's transformation of a congeries of medieval neighborhoods into the present city of wide boulevards and breathtaking vistas; in Vienna, the creation of the Ringstrasse, under the Emperor Franz Josef. Mr. Olsen, incidentally, does not go along with the generally accepted theory that Haussmann's boulevards, which were too broad to barricade, were designed to frustrate revolutionary mobs and facilitate the rapid movement of police. The book is richly and imaginatively illustrated, with prints and paintings and photographs, and with ground plans of houses and apartments, to show how people in other centuries lived and what they had to put up with.

CITIES AND CIVILIZATIONS, by Christopher Hibbert (Weidenfeld & Nicolson; $24.95). Because of its scope—twenty-one cities, four thousand years—this is necessarily a more superficial book than Mr. Olsen's. Mr. Hibbert, an accomplished popularizer of history, writes of each city when it was at the peak of its power and cultural development. Thebes, where he begins, is described at the time of the great Pharaohs (2000-1200 B.C.), Athens under Pericles, Rome in the reign of the Emperor Trajan (A.D. 53-117). Mr. Hibbert tells us of Venice in Casanova's day (laying almost equal stress on the enchantments of its *dolce vita* and its evil smells). He evokes St. Petersburg when Peter the Great was building it, Paris under the Sun King, Vienna under Franz Josef (the Ringstrasse again). In North America, he gives brief histories of New Orleans and New York. (This last is the book's only disappointment.) The illustrations are lavish and apt.

A VIEW FROM THE STANDS, by John Kenneth Galbraith, edited by Andrea Williams (Houghton Mifflin; $22.95). Fugitive works—book reviews, magazine articles, letters to newspapers, transcripts of lectures, reminiscences—that the author has produced over the last thirty years. The pieces deal with economics and military-industrial power (in the first chapter Mr. Galbraith argues that arms control is the most urgent issue facing the world today), party politics, the arts, the personalities and achievements of people encountered in an active life. There is a section on writing and writers—short essays on such people as Mencken, Evelyn Waugh, John O'Hara, Hemingway, and William F. Buckley, Jr.—which shows that Mr. Galbraith can be a keen literary critic when he sets his mind to it. He writes that Evelyn Waugh's racism was "in keeping with Waugh's compulsion to search for any socially unacceptable attitude and then adopt it." And of Richard Nixon's self-analysis: "To the end he pictured himself as a man of impeccable virtue, but he was always given to overstatement." Some of the pieces first appeared in this magazine.

MISSION TO CIVILIZE: THE FRENCH WAY, by Mort Rosenblum (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $19.95). The senior foreign correspondent of the Associated Press adroitly examines political and cultural implications of France's conviction that French civilization not merely is the greatest or the grandest civilization but is civilization itself. The French have never regarded themselves as imperialists or colonizers or aggressors; they are apostles to barbarians, whose salvation lies

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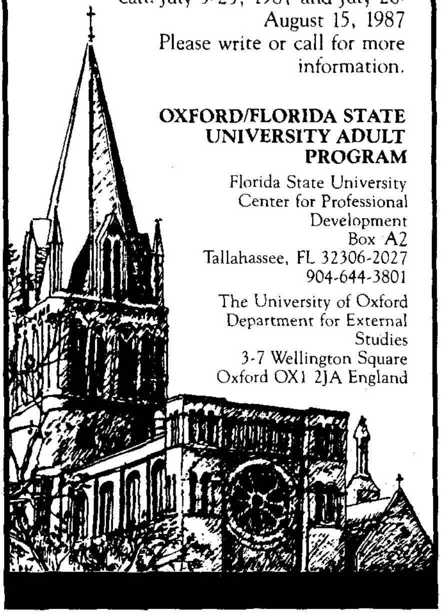

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in becoming French. Mr. Rosenblum's tour of the globe takes us to French possessions past and present. The book's excellence owes much to fact and firsthand experience, and possibly more to the author's nonchalant tone.

Populuxe, by Thomas Hine (Knopf; $29.95). Thomas Hine has synthesized the term "Populuxe" to describe that synthesis-prone era from 1954 to 1964: the era of "Never before!" and "Have it all!"—of Buck Rogers *and* Duncan Phyfe. Populuxe was remarkable for the quantity of its dynamically obsolescent successes: from contradictions in terms, like the raised ranch house and the hardtop convertible car, to the corrugated potato chip, "whose form presaged the ridged concrete roof found on so much roadside architecture around the turn of the 1960s." Mr. Hine, the Philadelphia *Inquirer's* architecture and design critic, cites the boomerang and the palette (in generic terms, the parabola and the blob) as Populuxe's chief motifs. His text is garnished with pictures of grilles and bumpers, of two-toned this and portable that. The demise of Populuxe was brought to suburbia by the makers of push-button appliances and push-button missile crises, which had suburbanites digging bomb shelters and worrying less about how to keep up with the Joneses than about how to keep the Joneses out.

Going Solo, by Roald Dahl (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $14.95). A lightweight, entertaining memoir of the author's time with the Royal Air Force in North Africa and Greece in the early, losing years of the Second World War. Mr. Dahl was twenty-three and an employee of the Shell Oil Company in Dar es Salaam when war with Germany was declared; he volunteered for flight training almost at once, and after six months was made a Pilot Officer and sent into combat at an R.A.F. station in Ismailia. He crashed in flames in the desert on his first mission, because of somebody's blundering, and nearly died. After recuperating, he was sent to Greece, where he and fourteen fellow Hurricane pilots were pitted against a German air force of five hundred fighters and five hundred bombers in the Battle of Athens. He was one of the few English survivors of that encounter to fly in the Syrian campaign, and was finally invalided home to Britain. Mr. Dahl is, of course, a gifted storyteller, with an eye for the humor of the outré and offbeat. The tales in this book, whether they deal with run-ins with black mambas in the African bush or with a lion that carried off the wife of the British District Officer's cook or with dogfights with Nazi planes over the Aegean Sea, all bear his hallmark. Photographs.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

Cover Story, by Colin Forbes (Atheneum; $17.95). It is known to British Intelligence (and to all other intelligence services) that a high-placed American statesman is defecting to the Soviet Union under the name Adam Procane. The question that occupies all involved is: Where and how will the defector attempt to pass through the Iron Curtain? Tweed, the British spymaster, believes that Scandinavia, particularly Finland, is the likeliest possibility. And, it turns interestingly out, an American general, an American couple of Cabinet rank, and a prominent American diplomat all are en route to that area. Then, there is a British journalist on the prowl in Finland in search of information about his wife's murder in Estonia. It can thus be seen that there is plot aplenty here. But, more than that, there is the fascination of the settings: Stockholm, Helsinki, and the ancient Estonian city of Tallinn. Mr. Forbes clearly knows these cities well, and he brings them nicely to life for us. It might be added that he manages all this intrigue with a mere three violent deaths. And, further, that the ending is both exactly right and totally unpredictable.

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[*From the Chicago Tribune*]

Preston, the 49th Ward Democratic committeeman, would have been a strong potential challenger to Orr, a loyal supporter of Mayor Harold Washington. Preston said he wanted to concentrate on legislative work and said a campaign could be politically derisive.

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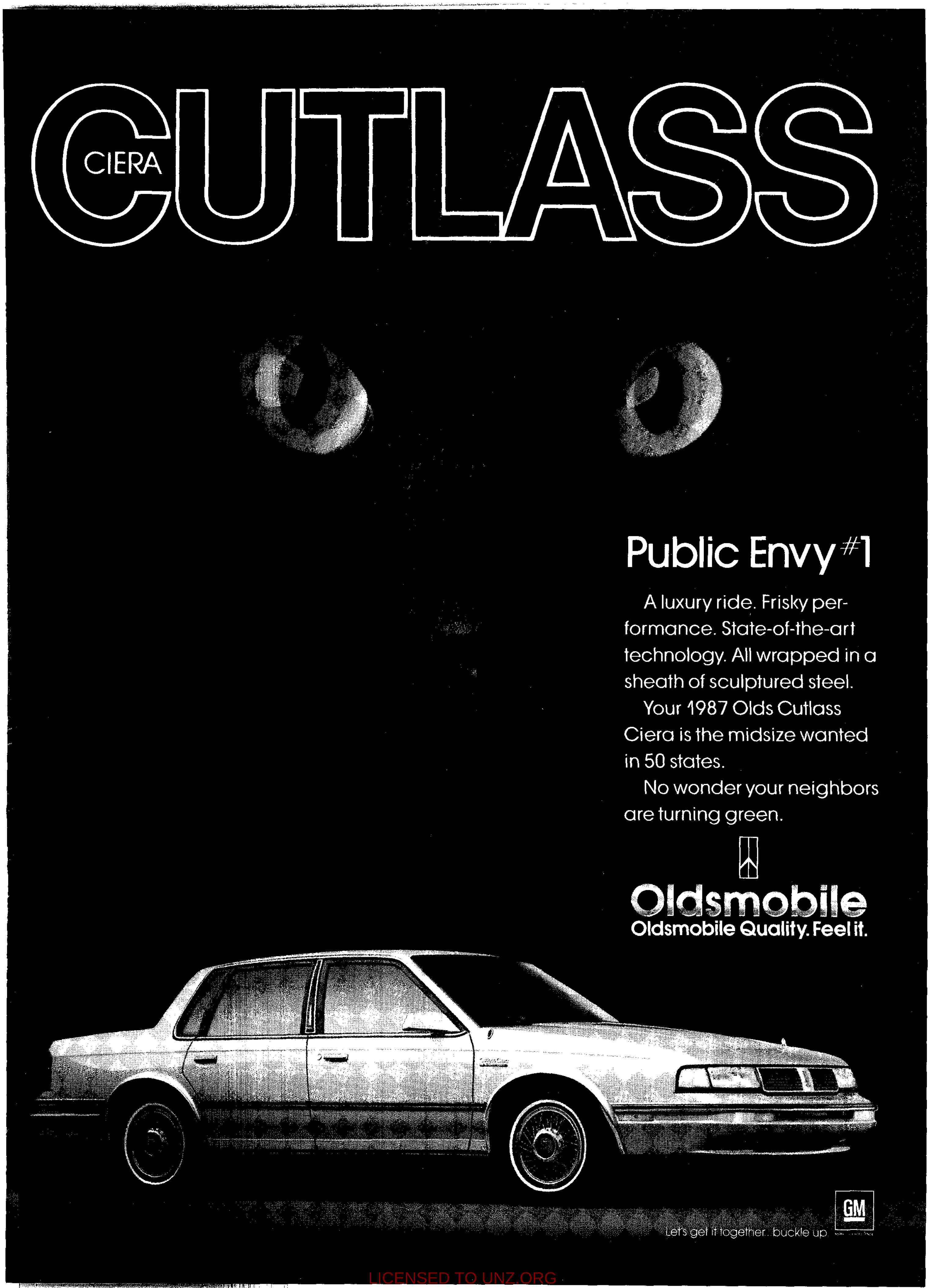

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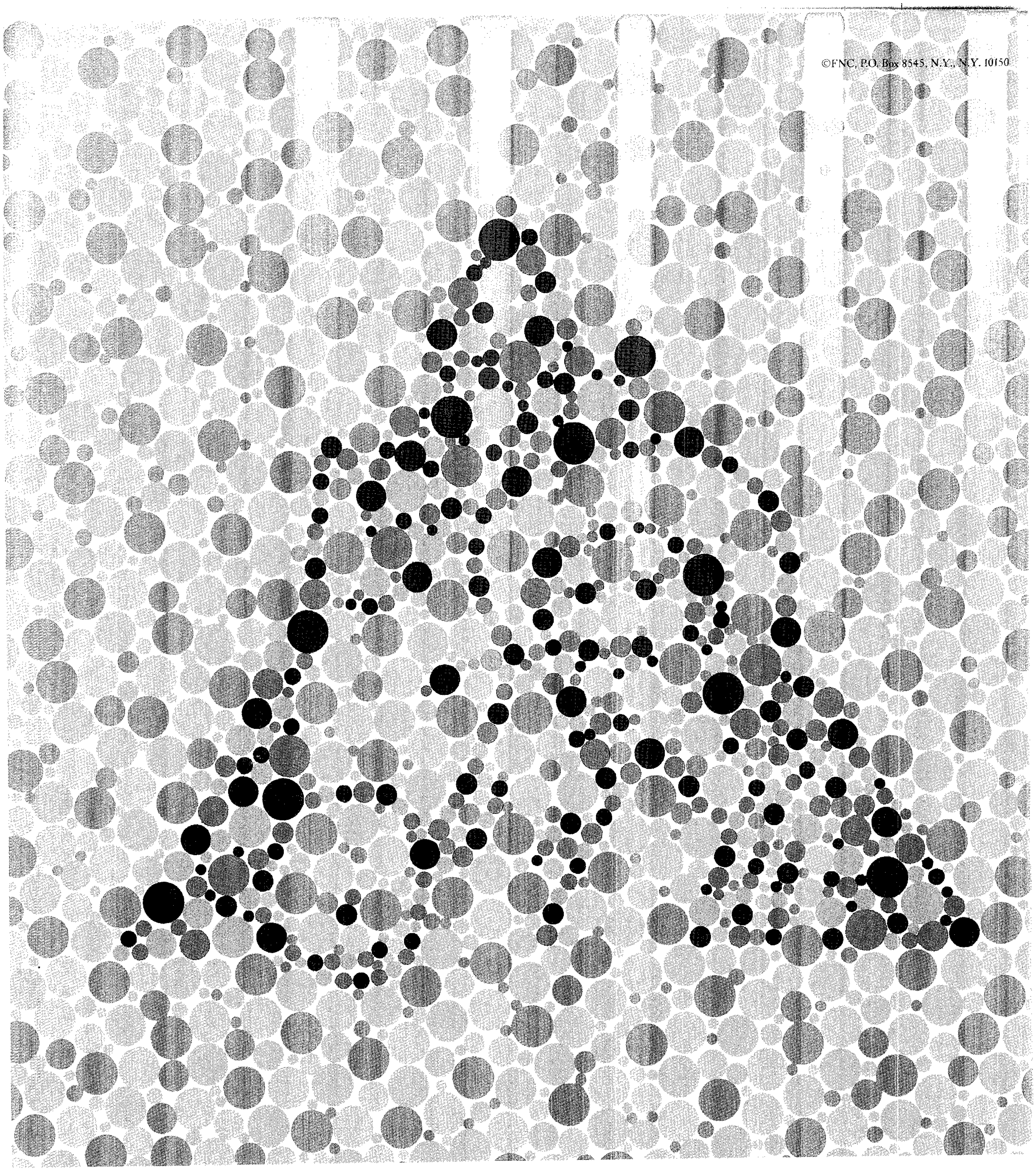

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